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Nintendo Shows Us Why Joanna Dark Was Worth Waiting For

OVER 100 GAMES INSIDE

- ▶ Dead or Alive 2
- ▶ Sega GT
- ▶ Turok 3
- ▶ Fur Fighters
- ▶ Alone in the Dark
- ▶ Vagrant Story
- ▶ Tony Hawk (DC)
- ▶ Daikatana
- ▶ Evil Dead

EGM 129

April 2000
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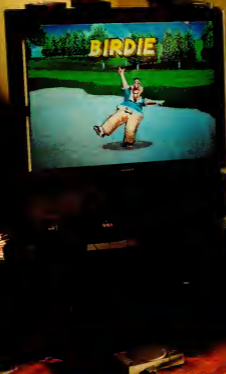


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The N64 was once the best of the bunch, but like it or not the end is near for Nintendo's 64-bit baby.

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Illustrator: Alan O'Keefe

SYSTEM KEY

	Dreamcast
	Nintendo 64
	PlayStation 2
	PlayStation
	Game Boy Color
	Neo-Geo Pocket Color
	Arcade



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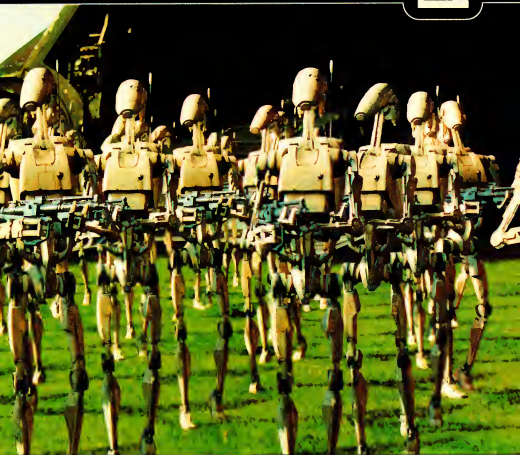
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- So...N64, dying or what? Nearly 90% of you think 'yes'
- What are people replacing their N64s with? Dreamcast
- Hotly debated review score of the month (again): GT2
- New term: "Murder Simulator"

Letters to the Editors

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Nintendo Has The Right Idea

It's no secret that Nintendo is known for targeting and catering to a "younger" audience. The accusation really comes down hard from ardent PSX fanatics, but it's also well known industry-wide. In fact, even Miyamoto responded to the issue of Nintendo's cute factor. That being said, I think more recognition needs to come out for Nintendo's innovation and emphasis on multiplayer gaming. Case in point: Mario Party. Many people, especially those who have never tried

matches. But nothing I've found compares to the humor, the sheer amount of laughter, and the simple fun that Mario Party generates. And it's four-player which is wonderful.

I think Nintendo is right-on with its approach to four-player fun. I never realized how good it can be. I'm disappointed that PS2 won't come standard with four-player support, though I know it will be a great system. I do love my PlayStation as well as my N64. But it doesn't bother me in the least that Nintendo specializes in "cute" characters and silly themes. Because though they may target younger audiences, they do

"...nothing I've found compares to the humor, the sheer amount of laughter and the simple fun that Mario Party generates."

it may be scowling and asking, "Mario Party's the Nintendo Game of the Year?" (EGM's pick) The answer: YES!!! Despite the "cuteness" Mario Party and now Mario Party 2 yield, without a doubt, it's the most entertaining moments I've ever had with a video game system. Sure it's fun to beat a game by yourself. Sure it's fun to play fighting games and shooter death-

it with such innovative, high-quality products that it makes it fun for everyone.

I sincerely hope the Mario Party franchise makes the leap to the Dolphin. I can see a lot of future potential and possibilities for the great series.

Jeff Rosenberg
jrosenb@cit.com

We have to concur that the Mario Party games are pretty damn fun...even if the second game isn't much more than a remix of the first. While Nintendo has failed to capitalize on the more 'mature' side

of gaming, it has to be said that they really know what they're doing when it comes to producing simple, fun and effective games—especially around their most prominent franchises. Long live Mario.

Congratulations. You win an **InfraCt** controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64 (N64).

See page 183 for official rules



Sim Murder Simulator

If all these politicians think that most video games are murder sims, don't you think it's about time a developer came out with a title called Murder Simulator? Or Maxis could come straight out and create Theme Sim Murder or something. Just a thought. It would be hella fun to put a politician into a big water vat and throw in jumper cables attached to my '90

Grand Am. The possibilities are endless, my friends.
the_kidney@yahoo.com

We're not really sure if that's the kind of thing Maxis would go for.

Defending Lara

I've noticed a growing trend in my magazine recently where you guys seem to love bashing the Tomb Raider franchise. I can see your point when you claim not much has changed in the

"I think it is now the politically correct thing to say you're sick of Tomb Raider."

various instalments since TR2, but so what? For people like me who LOVED the first Tomb Raider, and really just wanted to keep playing after they solved it, this is just fine. I find the graphics are better with each game, the new moves are cool, and the vehicles and settings are also enough to keep me coming back. In fact, the Tomb Raider games are the only PlayStation platform games that have ever kept my attention long enough to have solved all four of them. Even your beloved Metal Gear Solid (admittedly a fairly cool game) lost me, and now collects dust as I'm stuck somewhere in the middle of it. The one criticism of the games that I cannot tolerate is when you claim they have the same "sloppy" control. I think this is more an issue of you guys not playing the games enough. I find the controls easy to master, and consistent from game to game. I think Nightmare Creatures, and more recently, Xena are much better examples of just how bad a game's controls CAN be. What platform game with as many complex moves has better control than TR? I also think that your constant bashing and pleading to Eidos to give Lara a rest has jaded some of your readers. I think it is now the politically correct thing to say you're sick of Tomb Raider, as illustrated in your poll (page 31, issue #128). So in conclusion, Tomb Raider was a cool concept, and executed beautifully. Until I see another game do it better, give me more!

MFlipBook@aol.com

It's good that you enjoy the Tomb Raider series so much. That is, after all, what playing games is all about. The team on the Review Crew feel that the concept is being drawn out beyond what it can sustain with current technology...but as long as gamers find it fun—well, what better accolade can a game hope to achieve? We still feel that Tomb Raider was the series' "glory" moment—and TRa is still the biggest selling of the franchise. Let's hope that we see an overhaul of the franchise on PS2 while still holding on to the qualities that gamers love about it.

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LETTERS

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Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness...or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

Gunless Survivor

My question is, why is Capcom releasing the gun version of Resident Evil in the U.S. without the light gun compatibility. What's up with that? I don't think anyone would want a game made for the light gun but have to play it with a controller (House of the Dead 2 gets very frustrating without a gun). I'm a Diehard RE fan, but if Capcom wants this game to sell big they need to leave it gun compatible. What do you think?

Derrick Lowe
xldeathqz@hotmail.com

In the current 'murder simulator' obsessed climate, Capcom felt it was best to take the gun out of the game. We feel that they could have probably gotten away with just taking the word 'Gun' out of the name...but Capcom management wanted to play it safe. Believe us though, you're not missing much. We've played the Japanese version (with gun support) and it's not a particularly wonderful game.

Kideo Games

With the migration of PlayStations to younger siblings as older gamers move to more powerful machines, we'll be doing more PS games skewed toward younger players with brands like Tonka

and CatDog. Is EGM interested in reviewing these kideo games? They won't stack up well against a Dino Crisis and other deep games. Will you guys review them for what they are or against much deeper games that will blow them away?

Jayson Hill
Manager of Public Relations
Hasbro Interactive

We'll always review a game with due consideration to the audience that it's designed for. While EGM is aimed at older readers (the majority of our readers are actually in their twenties) we do take a look at the younger stuff from time to time. In fact, we recently reviewed THQ's Rugrats game—and it fared particularly well. As gaming becomes more accepted and expands it's reach—we'll make sure that we cover the subject from all angles.

Thank God For Home Systems

I feel it's very possible that arcades are dying. I agree with Che (Final Word, issue #127) in the fact that arcades should be used as a forecast of things to come and I still use them for that reason. However, I mainly check them out now to see which games will probably be coming out on my home

"When was the last time they had a game with balls?"

Question of the Moment

Do you think the N64 is drawing its dying breath?

After Zelda Golden and Perfect Dark, it's ALL OVER.

jedi-slayer@webtv.net

Of course! When was the last time [it] had a game with balls?

sapaflyzk@juno.com

Hell no, [it has] a few more energy-knocking games in [its] arsenal, just wait for Perfect Dark!

mendezj@msn-pa.org

The N64, has been going downhill for a while, and crap like Superman, the 36 versions of Tetris and Mortal Kombat don't help either.

laver_builer@yahoo.com

Yes, I do think the N64 is dying and that's why. I am selling mine toward the purchase of a shiny new Dreamcast.

homerfana6@aol.com

N64 isn't drawing its last breath yet, it still has a couple games left: up its sleeve, Perfect Dark and Zelda Golden included.

Chasej4@aol.com

I sure as hell hope it doesn't before Rare releases Perfect Dark and Banjo-Tooie. In fact, I hope it goes on forever!

dwhulfod@aol.com

I think it's been on its death bed its whole life. It has always sucked.

pantibeman@yahoo.com

Um...you mean it's not dead yet?

amazing_spider@webtv.net

HELL NO! Just wait until Perfect Dark hits the shelves. Then N64 will be the ass-kickin' machine that it was when GoldenEye made its debut. Beyond Perfect Dark...who knows?

the_jage@allyoumail.com

Leave N64 alone for a change. For all the supposed "crap" it offers it sells rather well.

nicholas_dg@hotmail.com

"The people you see in the pages of the magazine aren't actually the 'real' EGM crew members. The photos are simply actors that we employ to 'play' us."

DESERT ISLAND GAMES

Five Games You Couldn't Do Without

If you were stuck on a desert island and could only have five games with you, which would they be? E-mail us your lists at EGM@zd.com. Mark the subject line "Desert Island Games."

Grand Theft Auto 2
Final Fantasy VIII
Final Fantasy VII
Rogue Squadron
Twisted Metal 2
god@laterd@yahoo.com

Zelda: Ocarina Of Time
Final Fantasy VIII
Evil Zone
Final Fantasy Anthology
Mario Kart 64
carnegemas@btelnet.com

Final Fantasy II
Lunar 2 Eternal Blue
Chrono Trigger
Soul Calibur
Metal Gear Solid
bigdaddy19@aol.com

Madden 2000
Final Fantasy VII
Lunar: SSSC
Super Mario 64
All-Star Baseball 2000
skall@qayyrbt@aol.com

Half-Life
Myth 2
Gran Turismo
Castlevania: SOTN
Planescape: Torment
wcmqes83@yahoo.com

Final Fantasy Tactics
Final Fantasy VII
Shadowrun (Genesis)
GoldenEye
NBA Live 2000
monte423@aol.com

Next Month's Question of the Moment:

Is Sony going to rule the universe with PlayStation2?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@zd.com with the subject heading: Rule



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console, I'm 30 now so I grew up through the whole video game timeline and not only does pinball air a form of romanticism but so does the classic arcade scene that I grew up with. Yes I'm sad that arcades may be going by the wayside, but I thank God daily for the butt-kickin' home systems we have today.

Michael Gallagher
jmg71g@gateway.net

More GT2 Debate

It seems that Sony has acknowledged the massive mistakes that you guys somehow missed and is now offering gamers the chance to send in their copies of GT2 with a replacement bug-free copy by calling their customer service hotline. But since your Review Crew already perceived the game as one of total perfection, I expect all of you to keep your copies and refrain from exchanging them for the update. Somehow I highly doubt this will be the case, leaving yet another dubious mark on EGM's questionable reviews in recent months.

Brad G
nbgare@tufeway.com

So, you're saying you didn't like GT2? Or that you're just aware of some bugs? Have you actually played it all the way through yet? Does the 98.2% problem really detract from the extremely enjoyable experience it offers? We have stated over and over and over again that a score of so does not mark something as 'perfect', it simply means that it is the very best example of the genre on the system concerned. As we've said before—the bugs in the game don't damage the fact that GT2 is the best value for money that pretty much any game offers on the PlayStation. Sure, there are some sloppy mistakes, but they hardly ruin anything. Stop being so anal retentive and just enjoy it...that's what it's there for. If you take everything so seriously Brad, you're going to miss out on some of life's enjoyable things. Personally, I'm not exchanging my copy...I'm having too much fun with it.

SHORTS

The vice betrays of the 100 letters board. Is Ron getting a nice fellow?

zoosie@atd.com
Shawn says he was very nice, although he apparently has very rough hands.

I want to know why everytime I open an EGM mag you are always leaving bad stuff about N64. I don't like N64 but we're not saying 'bad stuff'—we're just empathizing with N64 owners.

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Our Crystal Balls

Like the video game football fan that I am, whenever I am in the bathroom downloading files, I like to read the most honest and truthful reviews that your EGM writers gave 2000's crop of NFL and college games over and over again. I think that issue 123 is my all-time champ for longevity! In the Johns EVERY mens bathroom stall from Best Buy to Wal-Mart should have a copy in it. Anyway, I noticed the picture for the review of Sega's NFL 2K pictured the Titans playing the Rams [this year's two Super Bowl teams]. Was this random or does EGM have their own psychic department? Will we be seeing Che or Crispin on late-night television ads flipping tarot cards? Well, if anyone places bets in Vegas for next football season, they should check with whoever placed that pic

above the NFL 2K review first.

Ryan Becerra
Wisconsin

We don't have any mystical powers, it's actually a time machine. We use it to travel forward in time and make note of sports results. We actually knew the final score of the Super Bowl before it happened—so we all bet thousands of dollars on it and are now millionaires. We've been doing it for years. The people you see in the pages of the magazine aren't actually the 'real' EGM crew members. The photos are simply actors who we employ to 'play' us. The real Review Crew and Art Team are currently sunning themselves in the Bahamas, only leaving the beach to refresh their drinks, change their shorts and flirt with lovely ladies.

LETTER ART

WINNER

Robert Stanley
Fiskeville, MA



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Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys...better luck next time. Feel free to e-mail us artwork as well. More of our messages are e-mails these days—so don't miss out!



Banyon Ford
Chesterfield, SC



Huang Tran
Stockton, CA



Leann Kaczmarek, Westchester, NY



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OMIKRON

The Nomad Soul



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Far beyond the cushy confines of asphalt, a select breed of driver is pushing the limits of man, machine and sanity. The rally racer. Equipped with his trusty co-driver and war horse of a race car, he'll have to suck it up for up to four days of murderous driving in the most inhospitable reaches of the earth. Why not join in on the fun?

Colin McRae Rally: Slap on a clean pair of skivvies and give thanks for the roll bar. You're about to face the most



Corsica - Even on this idyllic island, the ridiculously narrow, winding roads make it impossible to relax



FOUR HOURS OF SCORCHING HEAT AND BLIND TURNS WEREN'T A

hair-raising form of racing since the invention of the wheel. For starters, you've got 11 world-class rally cars to run ragged. The Subaru Impreza WRC, Audi Quattro, Mitsubishi Lancer E4 and Seat Ibiza Kit Car Evo2, just to name a few. Their performance



and handling specs come straight from the

manufacturers. Tire type, steering sensitivity and suspension are all yours for the customizing.



you plan on going with all that horse-

power? Rally across eight different countries. From the frozen mountaintops of Monte Carlo to the winding coastal cliffs of Corsica. The dark jungles of Indonesia to the bone-jarring back roads of Greece. And



Greece - The cradle of Western civilization. Home of some really crappy gravel roads.



England - Bloody busy driving conditions. Muddy, sloopy and devoid of traction.



Sweden - The mother lode of treacherous, icy roads. And we use the term "roads" very loosely.

THINGS TO AVOID:





www.playstation.com




Colin McRae, the Flying Scotsman, World Rally Champion. Two-time British Rally Champion. Youngest champion in the history of the sport. Famously designed "Road Closed" signs.



Time Trial stages. (Good luck, mate.) Each stage is tougher than the next. Got an equally masochistic buddy? Go head-to-head in the 2-player Super Special Stage Rallies.

By now, it's pretty obvious. You're gonna need all the help you can get. Luckily,


 you've got Nicky Grist, Colin McRae's real-life co-driver, feeding you directions as you navigate every high-speed turn. Relax, rookie, there's also

Motes—Motes of high-stakes gambling. Equally dicey snow-covered, winding mountain roads.

PROBLEM. THAT SOGGY UNDERWEAR FEELING, NOW THAT WAS A PROBLEM.

from the dusty plains of the Australian Outback to the slippery mud bogs of the U.K. But this is no vacation. Each track is riddled with blind turns and surfaces that'll have you double-clutching all the way to the finish line. Strip away almost all vis-



 **Indonesia**—The dirt, wet jungles are enough to send most drivers crying back to their parents.

ibility and you've got the near-impossible night-driving stages. As if the horrendous driving conditions weren't enough, you'll have to

compete against Colin's best times in the



 **New Zealand**—Take on a maze of busy woodland tracks. Reduce the level to roadkill!

an in-depth Rally School training section taught by the master himself, Colin McRae.

If common sense still hasn't taken over, you may have what it takes to be one of the few, the proud, the extremely uncomfortable.

 **Mount Carlo**—Eternally-packed ice and slippery snow are about to have their way with you.



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PORSCHE UNLEASHED

Flight 911



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Mesures De Sécurité

Veillez à bien attacher vos ceintures en vue du démarrage imminent. Vous vous trouvez à bord de la Porsche 911 turbo.

安全のために

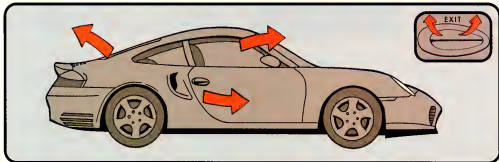
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EXIT OPERATION:
OBSERVE SURROUNDINGS. IF SCENERY IS MOVING—REMAIN IN VEHICLE. IF STATIONARY, PROCEED WITH CAUTION TO NEAREST EXIT.





Press Start

The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

It's A Square World, Baby

Most discussions about next-generation game machines (including Dreamcast, PlayStation2 and Dolphin) inevitably lead to the question, "What system is Square going to release Final Fantasy for?" If we had a nickel for every time we were asked that question. Now we have an answer.

Square announced its future plans including the plans for the next Final Fantasy games at Square Millennium, held on Jan. 27 at the Pacifico Yokohama in Yokohama, Japan. Square fans lined up early for two shows, each accommodating 5,000 people. As the

lights dimmed, attendees were treated to a future scenario as conceived by Square. Three young gamers living everyday lives meet online to play some Final Fantasy XI (yes, that's right, XI). While each waits for the others to get online, they read online manga (comics), download and listen to music, and exchange messages with each other—one of which is from a remote terminal located away from home. Once they're all in front of their PS2s, they lock 'n' load and prepare to take on a dungeon in FFXI, after first consulting an online strategy guide as to how to best approach it.

PlayOnline will make all of this possible. Square has teamed up with Japanese telecommunications company NTT Communications to create PlayOnline which will be the service of choice for Square. It will offer e-mail, chat, Internet surfing, downloadable music (with charts that are updated in real time), news, sports, shopping and gaming all in one. Instead of general e-mail, users set up character names for use in this virtual world. You decide who knows your real name (or even if they do) and you'll be able to access your messages and friends list from remote locations by using a memory card. Each user has a friends list to keep in touch with people he/she knows or plays games with, and will be able to tell if they're online and what they're currently doing—be it reading Manga, Web browsing or checking the



Square fans from across Japan dash to be the first to get into Square Millennium, held Jan. 27 at the Pacifico Yokohama (above). And afterward entering the playtesting area (bottom left) and playing its PS2 racing game, *Driving Emotion Type-S* (top left).

latest sports scores. You'll also be able to keep a shared schedule, where you can post meeting times/dates to do something together online or in real life.

Using updated sports scores, Square envisions a time when you'll be able to race against times achieved in real life just hours before in racing games, or get updated stats on demand for use in baseball and soccer titles. Square stressed that it's trying to create a virtual world which has something for everyone—though it sounds very similar to those of us in the U.S. who use the Internet on a daily basis.

According to information released after Square Millennium, Square plans for

PlayOnline to be both cross-platform and international. Players on PS2 and PC could exchange data and play together. And players in Japan and the U.S. could trade items in, say, Final Fantasy XI. This would be the first time such play has been offered on a console.

Afterward, everyone was ushered into a small playtesting area where fans could get hands-on trials of Square's PS2 racing and baseball games as well as its PS1 RPG Vagrant Story. There were also two booths selling Digicube and Square goodies from action figures to posters and figurines of favorite characters from the company's games. Overall, a great event that makes us wonder what else Square has for 2000. 🐉

SQUARE

MILLENNIUM

YOKOHAMA



PRESS
START

Play Misty for Me

If you watch the Pokémon TV show you may have seen Rachaal Lillis's name scroll by during the end credits. She's most well known as the voice of Misty, but her voice can be found in the English dubs of other anime shows brought to the U.S. EGM sat down with Rachaal to ask about voice acting, Pokémon, and to find out more.

EGM: How did you get into voice acting?

Rachaal Lillis: I was always interested in voice-over and followed the work of several voice actors when I was a teenager. In college I studied to be a doctor or a DNA researcher, and I also took a class at a local casting agency in voice-over acting, made a demo tape and shopped it around. I didn't always want to act—I've never really been able to conquer stagefright! When I was six my mom enrolled me in a drama class at the local rec center to get me involved with other kids, make friends, overcome the shyness. But I was terrified of being on stage—I spent the summer hiding from the teacher. Finally for the play presentation at the end of the class, the teacher put me in the rock costume, and I was the rock. :)

EGM: What are some of your favorite cartoons/anime series (old or new)?

RL: Inspector Gadget, Star Blazers, Vampire Princess Miyu, and I'm just starting to get into Vision of Escaflowne.

EGM: What other voice acting/acting have you done aside from Pokémon?

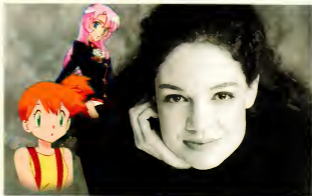
RL: In anime I've done voices in Revolutionary Girl Utena, The Inresponsible Captain Tylor,

"We all knew (Pokémon) was a cool show, but we weren't sure how it would be received."

Slayers, Slayers Next, Hikirian, Voltage Fighter Gowcaizer, Takagami and Geobreeders. I've voice acted in CD-ROMs, narrated a few science videos, and I've done some indie film work and theater.

EGM: Do you watch the finished episodes of Pokémon? What's your favorite episode?

RL: I try to watch the episodes when they air. I really like The Ghost of Maiden's Peak. It's an adorable episode with Brock and James falling in love with a girl who turns out to be a ghost Pokémon.



EGM: Are you anything like Misty in real life?

RL: Hehehe...ummm, I'm not sure—there's something to relate to in each character you do—you bring a bit of yourself to a role. I guess I relate somewhat to Misty. Like her I'm the youngest of all girl siblings and have encountered some events that can accompany that. And I can understand her temper as well—I tend not to fly off the handle like she does, but when she sits there and stew and growls...yes, that's familiar!

EGM: When you're recording the voices for an episode are the other actors there?

RL: Each actor dubs alone, usually. If someone has been there before you, the track that he or she recorded is played so there is a vocal reference. If you're the first one there, you

pretty much record into silence and are the reference for everyone else. The schedule rotates, so sometimes some of Ash or Brock or James will already be there, sometimes not.

EGM: Is there any ad-libbing after a scripted line is read?

RL: I'm not a big ad-libber. Sometimes we find ourselves mercilessly quoting movies in between takes. We've been on an *It's a Wonderful Life* and *Sling Blade* kick recently. In general we stay close to the script, but there are times when we have to mold the dialog or

just try new things. In the Ninja episode, Brock says to Misty about Psyduck, "Talent like that must be a real pain." The literal translation of Misty's response was, "That's true." We tried it and it sounded a little strange, and the director didn't like it. He said, "Try saying something else, show that you know what a pain Psyduck is." They ran the scene again, and I just said, "Woah, yeah." It sounded more world-weary, and they kept it.

EGM: Did you ever think Pokémon would get to be this big?

RL: We all knew it was a cool show, but we weren't sure how it would be received. It started to air in September of 1998, but I didn't know how it was doing in the ratings until late October, when we found out that it was doing extremely well. We were all pretty excited about that. But beyond numbers I didn't really see any evidence of it being widely watched until I went to my first anime convention as a guest. I saw people dressed as characters from the show, and people of all ages were talking about it. It was amazing to see it received like that.

EGM: What do you like to do besides voice act? Any hobbies?

RL: I've gotten more into anime, I like movies and music, art exhibits and museums (trying to absorb some culture while I live here!), reading, cooking. A friend got me a Sony PlayStation for Christmas, and I've now gone from having never played a video game to making Sligs explode and rescuing fellow Mudokons.

Those of you with alaphantina memories may recall the cable-ready nature of the original Intellivision. The PlayCable box was designed to download files from the cable network back in 1981. Unfortunately the system was soon out of data due to memory constraints (it didn't have enough memory to download the later, larger 8k games) and the fact that cable providers couldn't spare the bandwidth.

Mattel To Re-Enter Video Game Hardware Market: Intellivision Lives!

Encouraged by the success of their line of educational and "Youth Oriented"-licensed PC titles, Mattel is rumored to be working with Daewoo, AMD and Dolby Labs to develop a next-generation gaming console system. Retro gaming fans will be particularly excited to learn that the new machine will most likely go by the name Giga-Intellivision.

The new system will reportedly feature the following: The recently announced AMD L6GHz processor, an as-yet-unnamed graphics processor (thought to be developed by a relatively unknown team called Lipra s

Technologies), an internal 8 GB hard drive for saves, built-in cable modem, DVD/CD player, Dolby Digital sound system, and in a novel approach to the market, a deluxe model will be shipped with a 100-watt, six-speaker sound system, including subwoofer. Korean giant Daewoo will be primarily involved as a manufacturer.

No release date is set, but developer interest is said to be "extremely high" thanks to the staggering power of the AMD processor, and the proposed abilities of Lipra s Technologies' graphics technology.

Utilizing the somewhat pretentiously named "Sensation Heightening Interactive Technology" the Lipra s chip will outperform PS2's Emotion Engine and Graphics Synthesizer technologies by some considerable degree.

No firm details are available as we go to press, but our sources claim the system exists, and could be ready for release before the end of the year. In fact, in a bold move we've learned that less powerful test systems are already out with focus groups indicating that the Mattel group has already settled on joystick and system designs.



"Our Sensation Heightening Interactive Technology will kick Sony's Emotion Engine's Ass. Feel it Sony..."

- Lipra s Technologies representative (who wishes to remain nameless until a formal announcement is made) when questioned about the Giga Intellivision.

GIGA INTELLIVISION ONLINE POLL

So... are you excited about Mattel's vision for a next-generation console?

I owned an Intellivision and I'm excited about the Giga Intellivision.	4100
I owned an Intellivision and thought it sucked.	2888
I have no idea what an Intellivision is. Who am I?	3742
I have no idea, but I just wanted to vote anyway.	4374
The host from NES Jaws.	4935

DEVELOPER PROFILE

Sinister Games

www.sinistergames.com
 Number of employees: 15
 Location: Chapel Hill, NC



Gameography: Shadow Company; Dukes of Hazard; Racing for Home

The most challenging thing about making a video game based on The Dukes of Hazard would be: The schedule —we finished the game in three and a half months (most games take more than a year to complete).

The thing we're most excited about with the next generation of video games systems is: New hardware with fewer limitations. We can do more to immerse the player in the game.

If there was one thing we could change about this industry, it would be: Make sure that when Eidos throws a party for 3000 that they have room for more than 1500 (industry joke...Eidos always sends too many tickets out for launch parties, and people get stuck outside).

During breaks from late-night programming sessions, we: There are NO breaks. (Odd, considering the answer to the next question.)

Our favorite game to play in the office (not by us) is: Starcraft, Half-Life, Quake III; Arena

Favorite snack food(s): M&Ms, pizza, coffee, Whoppers and soda. It's a food group, right?

Music that inspires us around the office: Different stuff for different people. Includes Korn, Slipknot, Smile, Garbage, Chemical Brothers, Pink Floyd.



PRESS
START

Tidbits

Black & White

Black & White GB

Lionhead and EA have just announced a deal with developers M4 to produce a handheld version of the much-lauded PC "God RPG" game, Black & White. Quite how the team at M4 will be bringing the ambitious title to the Game Boy is unclear at present as the game is a substantial exercise in AI and online functionality. A project for Game Boy Advance perhaps? We'll bring you more news next month.

Activision has announced it has signed an agreement with nine-time BMX world champion Mat Hoffman to develop Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX for PlayStation. He will consult and star in the game, scheduled for release this fall. The game will use an enhanced version of the Tony Hawk's Pro Skater engine. It will include two-player split-screen action and hundreds of tricks and signature moves in both street and vert arenas.

Hoffman Goes PS



Star Trek Online PS2

Sony Online is set to work with hot codeshop Verant (developers of EverQuest for 989 Studios) and Star Trek licensee Activision on a massive online multiplayer game set in the Star Trek universe. Although initially developed as a PC game, a PlayStation2 version is expected to hit sometime in 2005. Verant has high hopes for the game and expects to attract more than half a million subscribers.

Even Smaller Tidbits

Dino Crisis is coming to Game Boy Color... a new **Spy Hunter** will be ready for the **PS2** launch in the U.S....989 Studios has been absorbed back into SCEA...**Austin Powers** games will begin coming out later this year for every imaginable system from Rockstar...Sega's got a NASCAR arcade game on test in Japan called Rubbin' Racing...**THQ** has snagged the rights to make games based on **Scooby-Doo**...New Pokémon games headed your way this year include a puzzle game called **Rokémon Attack**...**Sega Toys** will release a robot dog in Japan called **Poo-Chi** that'll be out in the U.S. by **May** from **Tiger Electronics**...Teamo's **Dead or Alive 2** is coming to PS2. In Japan it'll be released in March; in the U.S., it's launch.

Last-Minute Update: Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Tony Hawk is once again headed to PlayStation (and Game Boy Color and PC, too) this fall. Activision/Newssoft have added plenty of new features to the sequel to make it an even better all-around game, with new tricks and combinations—including new grabs, grinds, inverts, lip and nollie tricks. There's also an extensive skatepark editor which lets

you create your very own courses. Offers players the chance to skate in exotic locales, too, like Rio De Janeiro, Marseille and New York City (oh, exotic). There's also a bunch of mini-games that you can play with a friend and of course a two-player split-screen mode for head-to-head play. Look for a more in-depth look at Tony Hawk 2 next month.





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PRESS
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ROCKSTAR'S ANGELS

Rockstar Games recently announced it has teamed with Angel Studios for two PlayStation titles aimed for a release this fall. *Midnight Club: Street Racing* is a city street-based racer, and *Getaway* is an open racer where you have to smuggle goods across the border and avoid the feds.

IMPORT CALENDAR

Marvel Vs. Capcom 2



Import Pick of the Month: Capcom's Dreamcast version of *Marvel Vs. Capcom*.

PlayStation

- 2/24 *Guitar Freaks APPEND* and *Mix*, Konami (Misc.)
- 2/24 *Strider 1&2*, Capcom (Action)
- Feb. *Popolocrois Story II*, SCEI (RPG)
- Mar. *Monster Farm Battle Card*, Tecmo (Misc.)
- Mar. *Ray Crisis*, Iaito (Shooter)

Dreamcast

- 2/24 *Aero Dancing F, CRI* (Simulation)
- 2/24 *Carrier, Jaleco* (Action)
- 3/2 *Virtua Cop 2*, Sega (Shooting)
- 3/16 *Puzzle Bobble 4*, Cyberfront (Puzzle)
- 3/23 *Twinkle Star Sprites*, SNK (Puzzle)
- 3/30 *Hello Kitty's Magical Block*, Sega (Action/Puzzle)
- 3/30 *King of Fighters '99 Evolution*, SNK (Fighting)
- 3/30 *Advanced World War*, Sega (Strategy)
- Mar. *Marvel Vs. Capcom 2*, Capcom (Fighting)

PlayStations

- 3/4 *A6: A-Train 6*, Artdink (Simulation)
- 3/4 *Drum Mania*, Konami (Misc.)
- 3/4 *Eternal Ring*, From Software (RPG)
- 3/4 *Fantavision*, SCEI (Misc.)
- 3/4 *Jikkyo World Soccer 2000*, Konami (Sports)
- 3/4 *Kessen*, Koei (Strategy/Simulation)
- 3/4 *Tekken Tag Tournament*, Namco (Fighting)
- 3/4 *Ridge Racer V*, Namco (Racing)
- 3/4 *Sky Surfer*, Idea Factory (Sports)
- 3/4 *Stepping Selection*, Jaleco (Misc.)
- Max. *Dead or Alive 2*, Tecmo (Fighting)
- Max. *Street Fighter EX3*, Capcom (Fighting)

*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

PlayStation Games For \$9.99?

Score one point for Sony if the following story is true. Games Industry newspaper *Games Business* reported in its Feb. 1 edition that "a number of high-ranking executives in the games industry" had indicated that "Sony will lower its licensing fees charged to third-party developers." What does this mean for you? Well, the story goes on to say that "one publisher says that he intends to offer new product at a \$9.99 price point as soon as it becomes feasible." The new license fee policy

continue to thrive, even when PS2 launches in September.

What can we expect to see in April? Early indications would seem to be that publishers will want to establish their own budget lines of software along the lines of the "Greatest Hits" range. Before Christmas a number of titles in this range dropped to a \$20 price point and retailers across the country were pleased that you all dashed out and bought them. Once one publisher makes the jump to \$9.99 it would

"(This) is a part of Sony's new strategy to continue to attract more 'casual' gamers..."

is apparently set to become Sony policy from April 1, 2000. And no, this isn't an April Fools' joke.

The new structure in license fees for publishers is a part of Sony's new strategy to continue to attract more and more "casual" gamers to the PlayStation format. With U.S. PlayStation unit sales now near the 30 million mark, the system is the closest to being a "mainstream" brand product as any other. By dropping the price to \$99 last year, and now providing the tools for publishers to produce cheap games, we should see the system

seem sensible that many others will follow. Expect to see first and second generation titles (*Twisted Metal* and *Warhawk* era games) hitting the price point first. If there was ever a time to go back and pick up some of those "classics" that you always meant to buy, it looks like this year will be the time to do it.

Classic Games for less than \$10?



Conker 64 From Friendly to F*** Off

Believe it or don't, Conker's Bad Fur Day—Rare's often-delayed, often-renamed 3D adventure—is not the cute, Banjo-Kazooie-style kid stuff we expected. Turns out the game is lewd, dripping with gore, oozing sexual innuendo and M-rated for your kid's protection. If you think it's a joke, we did too.

At the recent Perfect Dark press event, Nintendo's Ken Lobb (who could barely contain his glee) shocked us with a brief video of the game's new "tude. In the course of the two-minute tape, we saw a demon character who farts flames, chugs liquor and puffs a joint; a door that tells Conker to "F**k off"; a Boss who bangs his titanic metal testicles on the floor; a bikini-clad, jiggle-chested babe who comments to a nearby character that "Conker has a bigger bone than you"; and a platoon of Conker's compatriots chewed to red syrupy chunks by gunfire in a scene heavily inspired by *Saving Private Ryan*'s opening scene.

Needless to say, the throng of journalists watching the video exploded into cheers.

Conker's Bad Fur Day perfectly packs more voice and cinemas than *Perfect Dark*. The dialog is loaded with swearing, even if it's bleeped out (trust us—you can still tell what those F**king animals are F**king saying). Gameplay-wise, Conker's Bad Fur Day remains

the 3D adventure game we thought it'd be, and the star squirrel's reactive facial-expression system is still intact (the registers shock, surprise, fear, etc., depending on the situation).

Conker's new blue status is a bold move for Rare and Nintendo—especially since Conker's Pocket Tales on the Game Boy already established the game's star squirrel as a super-cute, kid's game-kinda guy. Either Rare's gone bonkers or has achieved a higher level of genius. But we gotta say, we're more than pleased to finally get some grown-up stuff from Nintendo, which will publish Conker's Bad Fur Day this Christmas.



"Fun? Yes. Funny? Sure. Obscene? Hell yeah."

-EGM

"Will become a long-played title in your game library"

-Game Informer




"If entertainment could be measured, GTA2 would bust the scale"

-Gamespy.com



GTA2

Grand Theft Auto is back.

-  **Completely open & non-linear game play** free you to carve your own way to the top of the crime underworld. Go anywhere. Steal everything. Jeck anyone!
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-  **Fierce playability** against a backdrop of urban anarchy the game play is more absorbing & involving than ever.



The incredibly fast-paced and fluid game play now matched by Sega's 128-bit system makes GTA2 a must-have for the Sega Dreamcast owner's game library.



Sega Dreamcast.



www.gta2.com
www.rockstargames.com



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"The game that breaks the survival horror mold..."

-NextGen

"Looks like the insanely popular Resident Evil series will finally have some competition..."

-GameFan.com

"Hope your PlayStation has a nightlight on it..."

-GameProWorld.com



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Over 50 hours of reality warping gameplay, plus over 70 minutes of stunning cinematics that propel the gripping story.

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Rud=Pyrokinesis
The ability to mentally exterminate matter!
Become totally immersed in a fully realized 3D universe that is yours to explore, yours to master - yours to obliterate!



The Galerians are an artificially created techno-species whose prime directive is the total annihilation of the human race.

Earth's only hope is Rion, a young man whose greatest weapon is the energy of his mind. By using Psychic Power Enhancement Chemicals, Rion is able to wage psychic war on the Galerians.

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DREAMCAST DOMINATES

The Dreamcast now represents 20 percent of the U.S. video game market. Not bad going for just five months work.

Quartermann - Video Game Gossip & Speculation

Just a quick hit of gossip this month I'm afraid. Wait for next month when we'll bring you lots of juicy PSa goodies from the PlayStation Festival in Japan. In the meantime...feast your eyes on these:

Rumor Those Sonic rumors we told you about a few months ago are in the air again, with the obvious sequel to Adventure being the most gossiped about.

Truth Sonic Adventure 2 isn't the only hot-ticket in the Sonic camp though. There are some strong indications that we'll see a Mario Party-style game starring Sonic and chums before the end of the year.

Rumor It's buyout time in the games industry and everyone seems to be looking into merging with everyone else in the aftermath of the AOL/Time Warner deal. Current rumors doing the rounds include EA merging with AOL/Time Warner, Activision merging with THQ, and Acclaim potentially being bought by Havas Interactive.

Truth Don't go ditching all of your stock yet, because none of this is confirmed. The EA deal is especially interesting, but it may just be confusion over the industry giant's recent exclusive content deal with AOL. As for the rest of them? Who knows? Convergence isn't just going to be about technology...it's going to be about money, and any of the deals listed above make a lot of sense.

Rumor Fresh from the glitz and glamour of winning an EGM Gamers' Choice award, the boys at AgeTec recently dropped hints about the future of the R-Type franchise.

Truth Watch for a new game on PS2 within the next year.

Rumor Speaking of AgeTec and PS2, we hear that Rising Zan will be making a return in a sequel for the system.

Truth Not exactly the biggest news ever...but it's interesting to see that lots of PlayStation franchises are jumping to PS2.

Rumor The sequel to Fear Effect is going to be a Dreamcast game. **Truth** Already bullish enough to think that it has another franchise game on its hands, Eidos is already looking into a follow-up game to the excellent anime-style adventure (see Review Crew this month). A Dreamcast version is cited as a definite possibility, but expect to see the new game on PS2 first. Also, we hear it's actually a prequel—so expect to see the origins of the characters as they work through past missions.

Rumor The Time Crisis rumors persist...

Truth Now going by the simple name of Time Crisis 3, the new game will be the first in the series developed specifically for the PlayStation. Expect to see it some time this year.

Rumor The next Namco Dreamcast game will not be Soul Calibur 2 as previously touted on the Web.

Truth Nope, the real deal is a port of the action puzzler *Mr. Driller*. Sorry to disappoint you.

Rumor The next Resident Evil will see you playing the role of an Umbrella agent.

Truth Producer Shinji Mikami stated in an interview in Famitsu that "I think it would be interesting for the next game to develop the Umbrella side." Watch this space for more news soon.

JAPAN TOP 10

1	Pocket Monsters Gold/Silver	
2	Digimon Adventure	WS
3	Valkyrie Profile	
4	Gran Turismo 2	
5	Muscle Program Vol. 1	
6	Menetarou Desetsu V	
7	Donkey Kong 64	
8	Pachi Slot Aruze Kingdom 2	
9	Mario Party 2	
10	Doko Doko Issyo	

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 1/23/2000

PS2 DVD Compatibility Problems?

You may have read stories on the Web about potential problems with the PS2 DVD functionality. This was because of a story in Japanese publication *Bort* which hinted that because of political tensions between the games division and the DVD division of Sony, much of the DVD functionality was to be removed from PS2. The rumors indicated that PlayStation2 would not support multi-story or multiple angles—key features for movies like *The Matrix*. Rumors also suggested that a special CD was needed before playing DVDs. Fortunately, this isn't the case. You may still read speculation elsewhere to the contrary, but **Sony is adamant that the PS2 will offer full DVD functionality.**



"People see the Dragon (machine gun) lying on the ground, they pick it up and boom! Nothing's more satisfying."

-Nintendo's Ken Lobb shows that the company isn't all about fluffy platform games and "family values."

"Thirty percent more gore isn't going to be that much more..."

-Eidos' Greg Rizzer tows the company line on violence in *Berzerk*.



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PRESS
START

The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of December, 1999

1 - Donkey Kong 64



Nintendo's prime ape is back on the small screen. This time the monkey needs an Expansion Pak just to get on the screen. He's brought some new friends with him on this adventure, too. But how long will he be on top?



5

8.5 8.5
Chris Crispin

8.5 8.0
John D. Shawn

2 - Pokémon Yellow



De-throned! Chaos ensues! A Pokémon game is not #1 this month...the horror! Nintendo's probably not too worried, DK64's on top, right? And there's plenty more Pokémon titles this year that'll probably take #1 soon.



1

8.0 6.0
Chris Crispin

8.0 6.0
Che Shee

3 - Pokémon Red



The original versions of Pokémon are still near the top of the charts more than a year after their release. How many games can say that, eh? Looks like "Gotta Catch 'Em All" is still working just fine for Nintendo.



3

9.0 8.0
John R. Crispin

8.0 9.0
John D. Sashi

4 - Gran Turismo 2



A Sony game in the top five, how can it happen? It's not Poké—but when it's a driving game as good as GT2 is, it better be in the top five (or no one's been listening to the Review Crew's scores). Like driving games? Go buy, now.



NEW

10 10
John Crispin

10 10
Deke Che

5 - Pokémon Blue



Nintendo scored a hit in 1998 with Pokémon (still on the charts). In it, you have to capture and battle creatures called "Pokémon" while defeating Gym Leaders at each town. It's also the number one-selling Game Boy game, ever.



2

9.0 8.0
John R. Crispin

8.0 9.0
John D. Sashi

6	Tomorrow Never Dies Electronic Arts		17
7	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater Activision		12
8	Pokémon Pinball Nintendo		4
9	Pokémon Snap Nintendo		6
10	NBA Live 2000 Electronic Arts		9

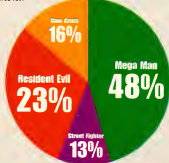
11	Spyro the Dragon SCEA		14
12	Gran Turismo SCEA		18
13	Crash Team Racing SCEA		10
14	Resident Evil 3: Nemesis Capcom		7
15	Frogger Hasbro Interactive		---
16	Toy Story 2 Activision		NEW
17	Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage SCEA		16
18	Super Mario Bros. Deluxe Nintendo		15
19	WWF Wrestlemania 2000 THQ		8
20	Crash Bandicoot WARPED SCEA		20

Source: MPD TRSIS Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Patricia at (316) 629-2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the EGM staff.

VIDEOGAMES.COM POLL

More! More! More! More!

Which of the following series should Capcom make more games for?



Source: Videogames.com news poll results for 2/2/00



MLB 2001

Every game is like game 7.

MARCH 2000



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NAPALM BOMBS. GRAVITY BOMBS.
PARALYZER BOMBS. FIRE BOMBS.
THIS GAME REALLY BLOWS.



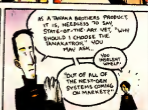
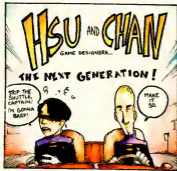
Silent Bomber



**BAN
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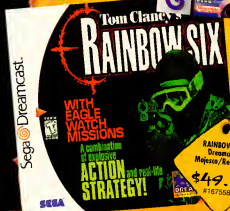
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WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

Poor Previews section. This month, you're simply a speed bump on readers' way to what they really want to see: the Perfect Dark cover story. After all, Rare's sure-to-be-a-masterpiece is shaping up to be so swell, we'd trade every game in this issue's Previews section to get to play it. Yup, Perfect Dark is that good.

If you could bring yourself to check out some of the other non-Perfect Dark games we're covering this month, you'll find plenty of other titles that'll raise your heart rate a beat or two. Perhaps most exciting is Tecmo's *Dead or Alive 2*. We finally got the preview beta in our offices. Of course, we were hoping to get a reviewable by now, but with no real versus mode, no stage select, no practice mode, no options, no this and no that, we knew we'd have to be content with a nice preview instead, even though for some odd reason, Tecmo said we could review this incomplete version (so if you read any reviews of *DoA2* in competing mags this month, you'll know what kind of standards they're working with...).



Is Dead or Alive 2 for Dreamcast as cool as eternal office favorite, Soul Calibur? Probably not, but it's pretty darn close...

If role-playing games are more your thing, make sure to put down on your "Things to Get" list *Grandia II* for the Dreamcast and *Vagrant Story* for the PlayStation (along with "more time to play these RPGs"). These two games are gonna blow your mind. If you can forget the Final Fantasy hype for just a moment, you'll find plenty of other more-than-worthy alternatives. Oh yeah, don't forget about SCEA's *Legend of Dragoon* and *Wild ARMS 2* as well! (All four of these RPGs are covered in this issue.)

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1. **Dead or Alive 2**
2. **Vagrant Story**
3. **Resident Evil ZERO**
4. **Grandia II**
5. **Power Stone 2**

Dreamcast, March 2000
PlayStation, Spring 2000
Nintendo 64, release date TBA
Dreamcast, Q4 2000
Arcade, Spring 2000

TEST YOUR RPG KNOW-HOW

Without looking further into this issue, try to name the RPGs below and the system on which they belong:



Take a deep breath and read carefully:

THE MOST ANTICIPATED FIGHTING GAME OF THE



DEAD OR ALIVE 2



Sega Dreamcast.

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- "EXPECT IT TO VISUALLY OUTSHINE ANYTHING ELSE AVAILABLE ON THE SYSTEM... IT SHOULD OFFER WHAT NO OTHER 3D FIGHTER HAS BEFORE." *Nintendo Game & Watch*
- THE MOST ADVANCED 3D POLYGON TECHNOLOGY EVER.
- "DOA 2 IS CURRENTLY LOOKING AMAZING..." *Official Sega Dreamcast 9/99*

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Once he gets behind the wheel, things get ugly.



PREVIEW

Dead Or Alive 2

Publisher:	Tecmo
Developer:	Tecmo-Team Ninja
Players:	1-4
Genre:	Fighting
% Done:	80%
Estimate:	March 2000
Play On:	PS2
Web Address:	www.tecmoinc.com
The Good:	Best-looking game this side of Soul Calibur.
The Bad:	Tag battles are only fought on one stage.
And The Why:	Zack's "massiere."



Jann-Lee and Lei Fang make an excellent team together. Here, they slam Ayane into an explosive wall (right). Jann-Lee jumps into action with a kick (above).



NO JAPANESE VERS

U.S. Only



In a somewhat bizarre and backward twist, *Dead Or Alive 2* will not be coming out for the Dreamcast in Japan. For once, a huge game is coming out only in America. Apparently, the decision came down from the top brass at Tecmo in Japan, who have had tensions with Sega of Japan. On top of that, unlike the success of the Dreamcast in the U.S. and Europe, its numbers are still numbingly minuscule in Japan. The version that Tecmo plans to release in Japan sometime this year is *Dead Or Alive 2* (probably under a different name) for the PS2. Tecmo Japan has also released an updated arcade version of *DoA2* nicknamed the Millennium version. Unfortunately, the Millennium edition is sorely missed on the DC *DoA2*.

It occurred to us, during our long nights with the *Dead Or Alive 2* beta this month, that some of you out there might have missed all the hype surrounding this second-generation Dreamcast fighter. Despite all that Team Ninja has accomplished in this amazing sequel to a decent Model 2 fighter, *DoA2* still has the dangerous potential of being overlooked by commercial, if not critical success. And since we've never done an extensive hands-on report of *DoA2*, we thought a proper preview was in order. What we've been given by Tecmo is, hands down, the most visually arresting and technically impressive game on the Dreamcast yet. If the industry consensus, that the current generation of Dreamcast games are drawing on 50 percent of the system's resources, is true, then *DoA2* is an incredible gauge of good things to come for Sega's last stand in the hardware business.

As a sequel, *DoA2* shares quite a few traits with another sequel by the name of *Soul Calibur*. For one, both games are absolute labors of love; Team Ninja's complete dedication to visual realism and technical excellence rivals that of our beloved *Calibur* boys over at Namco R&D. And like *Soul Calibur*, *DoA2* is a drastic improvement upon its predecessor.



Graphically, the game is leagues ahead of their initial offering on the Model 2. Team Ninja also tweaked the character balance and revamped the game's reversal system, after heeding complaints from frustrated gamers. The addition of full 3D movement, interactive backgrounds, multi-levelled arenas and tag battles add new layers of strategy to the brawl. Unlike more subtle changes to a game engine, the aforementioned upgrades could only have come by the power of better hardware.

DoA2, at its core, is still very much the same game as the original *DoA*. In the arcade, the game rests on three buttons (punch, kick, free) and a stick. The free button is a multipurpose button used for moving about in 3D, and tapping for reversals. The Dreamcast version will have the option to use a modified, control pad-friendly layout. With the DC control scheme, you'll have the option of using a block button, as well as a dedicated throw button. In the arcade configuration, blocking is done by pulling back, a la *Street Fighter II*.

It isn't enough to simply say that *DoA2* looks better or worse than *Soul Calibur*. Both games have hit a certain milestone of quality, so subjectivity will likely dictate which of the two you prefer when it comes time to judge. However, we should distinguish how the two games differ in their fields of visual excellence. *DoA2* is breathtaking and graceful, powerful and sudden. Still pictures, as



Walls and fences are great for rocking your opponents into a corner and then slamming them with a throw or a tag combo.



HAVE YOU SEEN?

Dead-Alive is a super gorefest by director Peter Jackson. This has got to be one of the goriest (and funniest) movies we've ever seen. It's also known as **Breindead**. Do check it out if you get the chance.



Multi-levelled fighting arenas play an important role in DoA2's story mode. When you knock an opponent off a ledge, your character will always pursue the fallen victim. Here Jann-Lee knocks Hayabusa off a tall imperial palace (above).

impressive as they may look, can't hope to do justice to the game's 60 fps fluidity.

The extensive amount of research and motion capture Team Ninja went through to reproduce the different fighting styles pays off in spades. When a character is struck by a heavy blow, he/she'll stagger in pain, double over and grimace, or hold his/her nose in silent agony. Also sophisticated is the way characters react to hits based on location and type. Kick somebody in his/her legs and he/she'll collapse on the force of his/her own weight. Land a fist in somebody's gut and depending on his/her body mass and your strength, he/she'll double over or slam up against a wall. Realistic motion capturing also plays an important role in how characters

handle reversals and counters. Not only do they look cool, they're also useful against predictable combos. Other nice touches include being able to use walls and electric fences by slamming your opponent into them. Knocking your enemy off a ledge causes extra damage and your character will automatically jump down after them to ensue the fight.

Not willing to be outdone, Team Ninja has also included a "tag battle" mode in DoA2. Like other team-based fighting games, certain combinations of fighters give you exclusive moves. For instance, Bass and Tina, the father/daughter wrestling team, have exclusive and devastating tag throws. Much like in advanced Tekken Tag play, tagging can also be used in a continuous juggle situation. Typical of most fighting games, timing is everything. The tag battles in DoA2 are by far the game's most promising and brilliant prospect; unfortunately, you can only play on one stage during tag battle.

The final version of DoA2 will have a Story Mode, Time Attack Mode, Team Battle Mode, Versus Mode, Sparring Mode and the Tag Battle Mode. Last month, we promised you a review of DoA2 this issue. For a full explanation of why we're only running a preview this issue, check the reviews Intro in Review Crew. In the meantime, salivate over these screenshots and dust off those arcade sticks... Because for the time being, DoA2 is the best-looking game out on the market. Period. 🍌



PANTY SHOTS

Fan Service

Some of you may remember the bouncing boobs in the first DoA. Well, they're less distracting now, but we still have to put up with cleavage and panty shots. Just what is Jann-Lee doing in the picture below?





PREVIEW

Fur Fighters

DID YOU KNOW?

In the early 19th century, wealthy fellows wore hats made from expensive waterproof beaver fur (or pelts). To this day, these inner pelts are used in the finest cowboy hats. A good beaver cowboy hat can easily cost \$400 or more.

Publisher:	Acclaim
Developer:	Bizarre Creations
Players:	1-2
Genre:	Action
R. Rating:	ES
Release:	June 2000
Price tag:	\$52, PC
Web Address:	www.acclaim.com www.furballs.com

The Good: Cute little creatures wielding big freaking guns.

The Bad: Outside of the weapons, it's quite Banjo-esque.

And the Top: Charred or bloodied fur from one of the buddies you kill.



You're waging a war against the evil Viggo, so it's only natural you meet up with your commanding officers every now and again for advice.

Levels will take you indoors and out, blowing holes through bad guys. Isn't it cute how that penguin uses a shotgun?



PLAY ELEMENTS

Presto Change-O!



Like in *Donkey Kong 64*, *Fur Fighters* lets you change into different characters at various points in the game. The character you can change into is displayed within the bubble. This comes in particularly handy when you find yourself stymied by an obstacle or puzzle. For example, let's say you're in front of a wall you must scale. Chances are a bubble with Juliette the cat is nearby. Or maybe you need to dig underneath a fence—simply find the appropriate bubble, and become Roofus the dog. You get the idea. You'll change back and forth between characters throughout the game, as each of the game's six main characters has his/her own special ability.

This upcoming 3D action game stars a bunch of cute furry critters who are armed to the hilt with an array of heavy-duty weaponry. The game is best described as Banjo-Kazooie with huge colorful worlds and cutesy characters, with some Duke Nukem-styled action thrown in. It's a little weird, but strangely satisfying.

All is not right in the world of the furballs. An evil general by the name of Viggo (who was once defeated by the peaceful critters of the Fur Fighter village) has returned. So being the bad guy that he is, he kidnaps the families of our six furry heroes. This leaves you with the task of rescuing all of your kin—and of course putting a stop to Viggo.

So who are our heroes? Let's just call them the

A-Team of the animal kingdom. Here's the roster: Bungallow, a high-jumping kangaroo; Rico, a dumb penguin; Chang, a crafty red panda; Roofus, an old dog; Juliette, a frisky feline; and Tweek, a day-old dragon who doesn't know his \$\$\$ from a hole in the ground. Each fur fighter has a unique attack and can use a slew of different weaponry ranging from a simple pistol to a gargantuan BFG-esque canon.

Levels are gigantic and feature multiple objectives and a boss of some kind. They're also themed—some levels are set in a big city with towering skyscrapers and subways, others are more woody. Of course, stages are also littered with bad guys—or bad bears in this case. And even these enemies are cute in their own way.

But the game isn't just about blowing away bad guys. You must also solve a number of puzzles per level, most of which are humorous. For example, in one case you must play a simon-says type dancing game against your Zebra commander. (with disco music playing the whole time). Sure, it's a simple game, but why is the Zebra dancing to disco?

In addition to the game's main single-player mode, there's a fairly straightforward two-player head-to-head mode—though there is talk of four-player support. Visually, *Fur Fighters* is extremely sharp and uses a variety of special effects that really give the game an amazingly 3D cartoon-like look. Check www.video-games.com for more info. 🐾



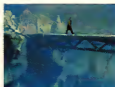
Which Create-A-Wrestler character do you think would win in a fight?

Expert	Gamer's Whiskey Marc	27%
EGM's	Elephant Sak	30%
Videogames.com's	E-40	86%

Source: videogames.com online poll

Alone in the Dark

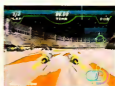
The series that started the whole survival horror thing is making a welcome return this fall thanks to **Infogrames'** revival of the franchise. Developed by **DarkWorks**, we'll see versions of the new game (technically the fourth part in the series) on the PC and the PlayStation as well. What we've seen so far looks incredibly impressive. The backdrops may be prerendered...but wow, they look good don't they?



Star Wars: Episode I Racer

The hit Nintendo 64 and PC 600 mph pod racing game is scheduled to make an appearance on the Dreamcast this April (to coincide with the VHS release of *The Phantom Menace*). The DC conversion is practically perfect: it's as fast and smooth as you could possibly want it to be. The graphics are topnotch, and the frame-rate flies along nicely, even in the two-player split-screen mode (unfortunately, to meet the April deadline, the team didn't have enough time to implement a four-player option).

The Dreamcast version will also have some non-gameplay Internet features (you'll be able to post and compare high scores), and **LucasArts** is planning on revoluting some promotions and contests around them.





PREVIEW
GALLERY

WEB SHOOTER

Everything you want to know about skateboarding: News on skateboarding, where to skate, what to buy and where to buy it, how to do tricks, links to 'zines and a whole lot more: www.skateboard.com

Silver

Silver was one of those games that was in development forever. Originally a project for Ocean Software (remember them?) in the U.K., the game eventually came out on the PC through **Infogrames** last year. Despite the build-up and the hype, it was met with a lukewarm reception on the PC thanks to its "console-like" RPG sensibilities. That'll do nicely for the Dreamcast then, thank you. Set in a traditional knights, big swords and monsters environment, the game should be with us this **summer**.



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Thanks to **Crave** and **Treyarch**, Tony Hawk has never looked so beautiful...and we are talking about the game here, not the pro skater himself. (Although, we suppose the handful of ladies out there who read the mag may think Tony Hawk is a hunk.) That's pretty much it really—the game itself is just like the PlayStation version as far as gameplay goes. What you're getting is an amazing upgrade to the graphics. Look for it in **May**.



"If you're too lazy to go online and see this awesome game for real, here are some meta-levels, fear color dots on 20th, recycled paper that do this game no justice what so ever. For example, in frame 3 you can't see that the goalie read you like a trusty novel since you tried your lame-o deke three times already, or that the game has over 1,000 motion captured moves, or that you can make line changes on the fly. And this piece of paper can't give you the mighty sound of your tool, heroic creator: OWS. So why don't you stop dinking around and see it for real at saga.com/games

Sega Dreamcast
IT'S THINKING



NHL 2k

*SCREEN DRABS SUCK
SEE IT FOR REAL AT
sega.com/games

So I was
down 2-1 with
under a minute
left in the third.
He was in my end, burning
up the clock, passing the puck around
like a plate of hot buffalo wings. So I drilled
him into the boards, chopped it loose, and we
go screaming up the ice. My winger is flying down
the side, and I feed him. He fires it across to Shanahan.
Shanahan flicks it to me. I hear the slap, and then it's like
everything slows down. I see the little knots on the net and
the scratches on the pipes, I see that biscuit spinning, the
GOALIE TWISTING, FALLING, ICE SPRAYING UP OFF HIS SKATES, AND I WONDER IS THIS JUST A

VIDEO GAME?

I mean, go to sega.com/games and then you
tell me. All I'm saying is, the next thing I know
I'm getting called for boarding my brother into
the brickwork on the fireplace. You've gotta
be kidding me. Like that's a foul? Come on
man, my skates never left the ice ...

ESRB
E
TEEN

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- Based on the arcade smash hit!



PlayStation 2 (PlayStation 2 required)



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*4-player option available on Nintendo[®] 64 and Sega Dreamcast[™] only.

MIDWAY
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PREVIEW
GALLERY



I, SPY

To find spy equipment on the Internet, check out www.mrspy.com. Here, you can order night-vision scopes, bug detectors or even armor plating for your car (\$70,000+). Note: We are not endorsing this stuff, we're just telling you about it. Order at your own risk!

Wacky Races

Penelope Pitstop. Dick Dastardly. Adult entertainment stars or long-lost cartoon characters? If you're old enough, then you probably do remember the two and the cartoon on which they starred. Now, the entire gang of daredevils is gearing up for something that's probably long overdue: *Wacky Races*, the video game (for DC, PS, GBC and PC).

The DC version is being developed by **Infogrames' Sheffield House**, and will feature several different "Wacky Racers" and their respective vehicles. The Slag Brothers' Boulder Mobile, for example, has the power to go off-roading and crash into small obstacles without losing any speed. Penelope on the other hand, has that special charm that will encourage AI cars to politely get out of her way. You'll also have power-ups and gadgets to pick up on the track that will help to ensure victory. Just think *Mario Kart*, only with more racing-oriented tracks.

This one- to four-player (split-screen) game is due to hit store shelves sometime this **summer** from **Infogrames**.



Industrial-Spy Operation Espionage

UFO Interactive brings **NEC's** Japanese DC title *Espion-agents* (developed by **Humex**) to the U.S. in **April**. Eight agents take on corporate power as they carry out missions for top-secret clients. Control multiple characters, solve puzzles, and save the world.



Nightmare Creatures II

Co-developed by **Kalisto** and **Universal**, and published by **Konami**, this sequel looks to be 10 times the game the original was—graphically and otherwise. Once again you're up against Dr. Crowley, except this time he's trying to become immortal. This **April** release is set in gothic Victorian England and has a decidedly horrific Marilyn Manson-esque cast. It's at least twice the size of the first game, with new enemies.





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PREVIEW
GALLERY



STRANGE GAME NAME...

Strange game name of the month: *Sega GT*. Homo Pocket for the VMU. The racer/virtual pet hybrid has you taking charge of Mr. Racer in order to make him a better driver.

Resident Evil Code: Veronica

One last Code: Veronica update before the review! Below are the first screens of the new "Battle Game" mode that opens up after you beat the main game. In this mode, you choose a character and run through a bunch of rooms, cleaning house until nobody's left. You can play this mode in first-person, too! Beating the Battle Game opens up additional secrets. As for the screens to the right...hmm, what could THAT be?



Sorcerian

Sorcerian originally appeared more than a decade ago on an old Japanese platform called the PC-BB. Now **Victor Interactive** has given Sorcerian a 128-Bit 3D facelift. The game will hit shelves this **spring**.



Sega GT

Who isn't salivating at the prospect of **Sega's** Gran Turismo beater? Boasting some absolutely incredible visuals, the game is set to be released in Japan any day now, and will be out in the U.S. by the **summer**. There'll be lots of cool licensed cars, some spectacular visuals, and (we're reliably informed) a whole host of VMU mini-games that have been sponsored by the car manufacturers.



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This Game
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Animated Blood and Gore
Strong Sexual Content

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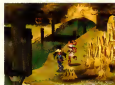
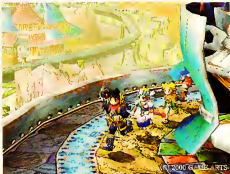


Check Out: Can't get enough of *Grandia II*? Make sure to hit <http://www.mygale.org/feena/rpg/grandia/>...it's an excellent site with the latest information on the progress of *Grandia II* as it makes its way to the Dreamcast.

Grandia II

Square wasn't the only developer busy with announcements this month. To the gleeful sigh of DC owners worldwide, **Game Arts** has revealed the first wave of details concerning *Grandia II*, a game many thought to be MIA on the DC just a few months ago.

Taking after a *Final Fantasy* tradition, *Grandia II* will feature an entirely new cast of characters in a world unrelated to the previous game. It's a world divided by an ancient conflict between the Gods, and in typical fashion, there's new evil on the rise and only your party of naive adventurers can set things right. So far, only a handful of characters have been introduced—Rudo the monster hunter, Elena a student priestess, Milenia the magic-user, Miracle the brutish beastman, and Lauren, a 13-year-old femme-boy. A bizarre skeleton crew to be sure, but one we're confident will turn out to be appealing. There's not much to say about the gameplay right now, but we hope *Grandia II*'s pseudo Active Time Battles return in an improved capacity. The game is slated for a **summer** release overseas...expect **Sega** to bring this thing out sometime in Q4.



THE FATE OF THE WORLD IS IN YOUR HANDS.

LITERALLY.

TERRORISM CAN STRIKE ANYWHERE. ESPECIALLY NOW THAT THE REAL-LIFE INTENSITY OF TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX IS AVAILABLE ON THE GAME BOY™ COLOR VIDEO GAME SYSTEM. TAKE COMMAND OF AN ELITE MULTINATIONAL STRIKE FORCE AND PROTECT THE WORLD AGAINST THE SCOURGE OF TERRORISM. CAREFULLY CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS AND STRATEGY. THEN BOLDLY EXECUTE YOUR MISSION—AND YOUR FOES—IN REAL TIME. WITH RAINBOW SIX AND YOUR GAME BOY COLOR YOU CAN FINALLY PUT TERRORISM DOWN TO SIZE.

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- TWO GAME MODES: TOP-DOWN OR FIRST PERSON WHEN THE ACTION HEATS UP.
- EXECUTE ASSAULTS ON TERRORIST INSTALLATIONS WITH UP TO EIGHT OPERATIVES.
- NIGHT VISION GOGGLES TO IMPROVE STEALTH IN NIGHT TIME MISSIONS.
- SNIPER MODE TO PICK OFF ENEMIES AT A SAFE DISTANCE.

Tom Clancy's RAINBOW SIX

GAME BOY
COLOR

ALSO
ON

NINTENDO⁶⁴



TEEN





PREVIEW
GALLERY

DID YOU KNOW?

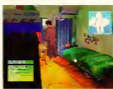
The original Daisenryaku for the Megadrive was compatible with the system's built-in modem for head-to-head play. You could also use a multi-tap and play four people simultaneously.

Roommania #203

It seems it's not enough to have the funky Seamen on their roster. **Sega** is determined to corner the market on truly bizarre "games" that redefine what to expect out of a console.

Vaguely ensconced in the "god-game" genre, you are an unseen entity in Roommania, who must influence the events that surround the main character, Taihei Neji. You achieve this by hurling invisible balls at items in his room in an attempt to get him to attend to said items.

Possibly on track for bizarre gaming event of the year, Roommania #203 (already out in Japan) has "this year's Seaman" stamped all over it. Don't expect SoA to bring over this particular "virtual-pet" (unlike Seaman, which is coming out here).



King of Fighters '99 Evolution

Another King of Fighters '99 for the Dreamcast? Let us explain: KOF Dream Match '99 which came out from **SNK** last year was actually KOF '98 from the arcade. That alone warrants a new release for KOF fans, since the true KOF '99 added new characters, as well as the ability to choose a "striker" to support your fighting triumvirate. Evolution will also feature a slew of support for NGPC games such as KOF R-2. Watch for it in **March**.



World Advance Daisenryaku

In the land of the rising sun, no game console is complete without a version of Daisenryaku. You might remember the Saturn version as Iron Storm here in America. Expect absolute anality when it comes to re-creating the units and the essential battles of WWII. Like previous versions, battles are played out in real-time 3D sequences. WAD, developed by **Systemsoft**, will be published by **Sega** and arrives in **March**.





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Player Origin: Eugene Oregon

Screen Name: CaphCarnage

"I stuck a cat in your rocket, you backhoe Tencelbore cracker. He's in there chewing your mice. But you probably got mice years off when you run out of passion, you monster truck-loving, buck-toothed hillbilly. And you other two instantly challenged dogs, hang up, I quit."

Player: 80011

Time Remaining: 00:00:00

Total Mice On Board: 329



Player Origin: Golden Pines West Community, Texas A123456

Screen Name: Peaches

"I'm aude"

Time Remaining: 00:00:00

Total Mice On Board: 329



01



02



03



04



Place of Origin: **Pittsweem, Vermont**

Screen Name: **JuliusSquaszer**

"Cap'nCarnage! What are you cap'n'g? The Oregon Survivalist Brando Mills? Maybe you should stop macking pine trees and focus on the cal re year blue rocket—oh, holy crap, I'm the blue rocket!"

Score: 0

Time Remaining: 00:00

Total Mice On Board: 0/1 cal



Place of Origin: **Tuscaloosa, Alabama**

Screen Name: **WhiteLightning**

"Shut up, Cap'nCarnage, you don't know bull-shiddy dos. I don't love mooslar trucks I am not dumb. I had to go to the crapper to know the cal get it. I am smart. I went to State. For too years. So you can just kiss my chu chu."

Score: 0

Time Remaining: 00:00

Total Mice On Board: 0/1 cal



scale: (1, 32)

TOP

ENGINE

50000

ChuChu Rocket

For the first time ever Team Sonic® presents your chance to go online and face wacko opponents from all across this great nation. Lead stampeding rodents into your rocket in a race against time while you sick vicious kitties on rival ships through more than 75 massive levels and five different modes.

E
ESRB RATING

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Omikron

The Nomad Soul

Focus on Omikron:
A quick chat with Phillip Campbell, Senior Designer at Eidos Interactive, who has worked closely with the Quantic Dream team over the last two years.....



Soyeika, Queen of the Adress.

Omikron: The Nomad Soul - What is it?!

Omikron: The Nomad Soul is a futuristic real-time adventure that is being developed by a talented development group in Paris, Quantic Dream. The game's ambitious storyline and gameplay elements transcend the narrow confines of traditional gaming genres, combining a deep game plot with adventure, exploration, action, combat and role-playing elements in order to fully immerse gamers into the Omikron world.

What is your title and role for Omikron?

I'm the Senior Designer for Eidos Interactive (USA), and have been walking the streets of Omikron for over two years "maintaining Eidos Interactive's commitment to design". Basically that means a bit of everything! Concept and level design, additional story, voice-talent wrangling, translations, integrating the 'Bowie' aspects of the game....Of course I'm always in



Guard of honor

total agreement with my two producers, Herve Albertazzi in the UK and shadow producer Tom Marx in the US. Almost always...

If possible put Omikron's story in a "nutshell".

The game of Omikron is essentially a trap. From the moment you walk into your local shop and see the Omikron box on the shelves you're playing the game, being lured into the trap - imagine a device similar to the Hellraiser cube, it's a compelling and beautiful object that you MUST explore. Omikron is a parallel universe, existing in real-time alongside Earth, and once your soul is projected into its dark streets there is no turning back until you succeed, or fail. You arrive in Omikron in possession of a body you do not know, for reasons you cannot fathom. From this point on you will have to talk, investigate, fight, drive, shoot, ride and explore your way to the conclusion of the game - and gain deliverance from this strange dimension.

David Cage, the boss of Quantic Dream, has spent over 3 years creating his singular, unique vision of Omikron - it's all we can do to keep up with his flights of imagination!

How many characters can you possess (upon death)? Is there a limit? Are they all fleshed out in this 'world city'?

There are about 40 characters that you can 'incarnate'. This may be as a result of death or by your own choice. One of the skills you develop is the ability to freely choose who you will be next. Death is by no means 'The End'. In Omikron, the

player never has to 'Quit', simply the next person that arrives at the scene of your demise becomes you.

Once you gain the ability to incarnate other characters, the only limit is the strength of your skill. You may happen upon a body you are particularly keen on, say outside the Arena, or in the local Pharmacy. Then, it's a matter of your mana strength as to whether you can project your soul into that character or not. Each character you can play has many traits, everything from a name to a unique skill set. Some characters even have apartments, jobs, or family. Some are better at certain skills than others, you may find it easier to fight if you are in possession of a strong, fast character, or you may find it easier



Sheet-out at the supermarket

to sneak through a forbidden installation in the guise of a Guard. One of the pleasures of the game occurs when you take on a new character as you pick up some of the threads of THEIR life. You may find yourself diverted from your main purpose to, for example, spend more time 'interacting' with your new wife, or helping Jorg to become "Master of the Arena". Incarnate as a

Now Available
 Sega Dreamcast



Hecogard a!ert!

Taar Monk, and you will not only gain access to the secret fighting techniques of the Taar, but also may feel a spiritual need to "walk the planet", misquoting religious tracts and writing bad poetry!

Tell us about the engine capabilities please.

Phew! Of course it's not just about technical capabilities, glossy special effects and variety of big guns, the measure of Quantic's success lies in whether they've succeeded in making an immensely playable and REAL world to experience. Here's some of what you get!

- A full-featured first-person shooter engine, with mouse control, intelligent enemies and interactive, cinematic interludes.
- A totally 3D fighting engine, with combos, special moves, each fighter and opponent with unique styles.
- A revolutionary 'learning' system - not only can you research and learn the rudiments of good investigation technique (adventuring, if you will) but fighting and shooting skills can be constantly improved. In shooting, players can learn their skills and practice different weapons at the many virtual shooting galleries throughout the city. You may even get some insight into guerrilla tactics from Krill, the resident weaponry expert. For fighting, most characters have access to virtual training centers, where they fight holographic enemies, and later, masters of the fighting art will demonstrate and teach the player new moves, combos etc. And, of course, if you're brave enough, there's always the Arena...
- The ability to explore many diverse zones of the city surrounded by hundreds of passers-by and vehicles. Every door has something behind it, adding to the richness of the story. Add to this over 40 possible reincarnations and over a hundred speaking characters...



Be. Carefull! Resever knows where you are...

- Full body and facial motion capture for the first time ever in a game, coupled with hours of dialogue. In Omikron, conversations are never static!
- Realistic day/night cycles, random snow and rain.
- Virtual concerts and a fully cinematic 'game-track' of original music.
- A cohesive and dynamic story, in the mould of the classic adventure games of the past.
- 4 hours of dialogues with more than 1200 responses
- 693 moves in motion capture
- 35 people working over 3 years, including 11 programmers.
- 489 Pizzas, 302 hamburgers, 71 chicken pineapples with Cantonese rice, 894 litres of coke
- 411 taxi bills

Equals - one realistic world, complete gaming freedom, who will you be next?



Investigating the Red Light District.

- With a scenario that starts perhaps reminiscent of the Blade Runner genre, but develops into something altogether more magical...
- Oh, ok then...**DAZZLING** special effects and **REALLY BIG GUNS!!!**

Here's Omikron in figures:

- More than 400 different sets in 4 huge cities
- More than 140 types of characters in 3D real-time
- More than 300 objects that can be manipulated
- Hundreds of passers-by and vehicles move about in the streets
- Two years to write the scenario
- 3.9 kilos of game design
- Thousands of sketches in the graphical design

Everyone, hard-core gamers, and novices alike, all start from the same place - alone, confused, scared. It's up to you and your soul to decide what to do next. Take advantage of the training, or just pile straight in? Go shopping, or go shoot something? Talk or fight? Follow the noble cause and save Omikron, or just hang about your apartment listening to cool music - it's all up to you...

Q and A courtesy of
 QWest's Gamecenter.com

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PREVIEW

Daikatana

Publisher: Kemco
Developer: Kemco
Players: 1-4
Genre: Action
% Done: 90%
Release: April 2000
Also On: PC

Web Address: www.top-gear.com
The Good: Aside from the usual Quake-like action, there are some RPG elements as well.
The Bad: The story is a bit contrived and cumbersome.
And The Why: The graphics, while decent, could be better.



If your dream vacation is ancient Greece then you'd better bring your Discus of Daedalus to fend off the nasty locals.

PC'S NPC

M.I.A.?



Conspicuous by their absence are the PC version's cool artificial intelligence sidekicks. The characters Superfly and Mikiko are able to join the squad after Hiro rescues them in the PC game. Once included in the group, players can give them simple commands like attack this enemy, get health power-up, stay here and guard, and follow me but don't engage enemies. It's like playing a co-op mode by yourself. Our preview copy of the N64 version only allowed us to choose the sidekicks for multiplayer deathmatch. Perhaps the complex AI routines are too much for the N64 to handle, but one can hope that the sidekicks make it into the final version.

Originally intended to be an Atari 2600 launch title (joking), Kemco has been working hard on the N64 port of John Romero's PC game: Daikatana. While the hype-machine has been rolling for years now about the PC edition, the N64 version is nearing completion.

The story starts you off in the year 2455 in Kyoto, Japan with Hiro Miyamoto (the main character) attempting to recover the stolen Daikatana—an ancient sword that allows its wielder to travel through time. The sword is in the fortress of the evil Kage Mishima, who has wrongfully been using the powers of Daikatana to secure himself as ruler of the world. It seems that a terrible plague has killed two-thirds of the planet's population and Kage has traveled back in time and stolen the vaccine. Sadly, he only gives out the potent cure to those he feels should live. Hiro must recover Daikatana and put things right.

What sets Daikatana apart from other N64 first-

person shooters? Well, for one this pup has more than a few RPG elements. Hiro has stats that increase when he gets enough experience points or collects certain power-ups. Don't be fooled however, this is still very much an action game.

In Daikatana players frag through four distinctly different eras. Each one has its own unique set of bad guys and firepower. The cities include: futuristic Japan, ancient Greece, medieval Norway and San Francisco about 30 years from now. The numbers are impressive with each era contributing to the game's total of 25 weapons, 50-plus enemies and over 30 levels. Sometimes it feels like Quake, Hexen and Duke Nukem (sans humor) all rolled into one.

Daikatana takes advantage of the RAM Pak for high-res graphics with little or no slowdown. The character models, while simple, look sharp. The plethora of imaginative weapons range from a medieval crossbow to a mystical staff of entwined snakes, to a powerful shockwave cannon.

Whether the player is exploring the catacombs of ancient Greece or the streets of 21st-century San Francisco, the multiple environments provide a great backdrop to the title's seek-and-destroy persona.

Multiplayer supports up to four players in deathmatch or Jewel Quest Modes. Unfortunately, only two multiplayer levels were included in our preview copy. Hopefully Kemco can shore-up all the loose ends before Daikatana's release this April.



Since Romero co-authored Quake, Daikatana was bound to have some Quake-inspired baddies. Check out this tough guy. Does he look familiar?



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HOT 

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PREVIEW
GALLERY

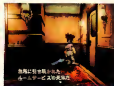
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Resident Evil ZERO

Capcom has finally unveiled the long-rumored N64-specific prequel to Resident Evil, Resident Evil Zero. RE ZERO stars Rebecca Chambers and details the events that took place before the original RE game. While there isn't much info yet, we do know that Rebecca won't be the only playable character, and that the Item Box won't be in the game (such). There's **no date** yet, but you can expect more info on this one soon...



Turok 3: Shadow of Oblivion

Just in case you still have some respect for the fast-deteriorating Turok franchise, **Acclaim** is set to rush out yet another installment before the end of the year. Big monsters, big guns and fast action are the order of the day again, but let's hope that Acclaim doesn't release the thing before it's ready this time. Turok 2 and Rage Wars both had potential, but were spoiled by problems. PLEASE Acclaim, don't ruin it again.



Looney Tunes: Duck Dodgers

Paradigm isn't known for 3D platform games, but DD looks like a good first effort. As the story goes, Marvin the Martian has built the ultimate weapon to destroy the earth. The weapon requires energy atoms which are scattered around the universe. Daffy must find them before Marvin's boys do, etc., etc. Five planets, cute mini-games and lots of gizmo power-ups permeate this **June Infogrames** title.





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DREAMCAST



Berserk

Berserk is a white-knuckle experience that keeps your finger on the attack button. The best Final Fight-type game to appear in ages.



02

Part real-time third-person adventure, part first-person shooter, 02 combines all of these elements into one highly anticipated stew.



ESPN Baseball

For fans of the ESPN TV productions, this game is designed to represent the coverage as well as the game itself. A sports fans dream!



Nightmaren Creators 2

18th century London is threatened by an onslaught of ghoulish beasts controlled by the evil Adam Crowley. In this highly atmospheric game.



Sensation

A game, in one sense, and a virtual existence sort of experiment in another. Highly addictive.



Resident Evil Code Veronica

Play as either Claire or Chris Redfield in Capcom's latest survival horror title. Sure to be nothing short of a huge hit on the Dreamcast.



Grand Theft Auto 2

The insanely popular 2D gangster game gets updated, improved and enhanced for Sega's box. Not for children...or the faint hearted.



ESPN NBA 2 Night

High realism comes to the courts with everything there is in the real game, including the media coverage.



Tech Romance

If you've ever gotten a kick out of watching giant-monster files, then you'll most likely dig Tech Romance.



Nihil 2

Visually stunning locations including Earth, various spacecraft and a parallel dimension round out this action-packed adventure title.



Nerventics

Two miles of various cities reconstructed and weather conditions - like rain, wind, and fog - will factor in to your race. A great street racer.



PLAYSTATION



Arena Football

From the makers of the popular NFL Blitz series, Midway, this game goes one step farther in the "no-holds-barred" football arena.



Army Man World War

This sequel to the hit Army Man 3D dares you to bottle the Tan nemesis in 25 missions over six different terrains. All-new weapons await you...



Baldur's Gate

In the same vein as AD&D, the region around Baldur's Gate is in turmoil. A shortage of metal is threatening the commoners and they need your help.



Dead or Alive 2

In Tecmo's latest Dead or Alive installment, you'll find new level stages, a Tag Match mode, and new characters such as Helena, an opera singer.



Drib Session

With a hardcore approach, Sony takes its turn entering the ever-popular skateboarding game park.



Hellsing 2

In Sony's sequel to the PS 1 HellDiver, this time there's a slew of new enemies and levels, increased puzzle solving and more character interaction.



Nightmaren Creators 2

The sinister Adam Crowley has escaped to the 20th century, where he encounters new monsters which means more gore and blood!



Speed Punkz

Blast foolish opponents out of your way with a variety of weapons, including missiles and green ooze. Great four-player racing fun!



The Legend of Dragoon

This game from Sony is a combination of scrolling fighting action and platform jumping that has a distinctly old-school flavor to it.



X-Men

Marvel fans and hard-core fighting fans alike will agree this latest X-Men game has it all: story mode, high-end cutscenes, fully 3D backgrounds, etc.



Lunar 2

The success and level of interest in the first Lunar assures that we get the sequel. RPG fans should set some time aside for this.



Counter Legends

Midway's popular update of the ancient arcade game brings the whole thing into 3D. Best played with three friends (or enemies.)



NINTENDO 64



AirBoarder USA

Turn your snowboard into an airboard and hover inches above the ground! Test your skills in a two-player versus mode, with over 80 different moves.



Excitebike 64

Reminiscent of the original Excitebike, but in 3D. With top-notch graphics, a Custom Track Mode and two- to four-player, don't miss it!



World Rally Challenge 2000

With nine courses in such locations as Spain, Brazil, Italy and others, officially licensed cars and a four player mode, this game has it all.



Perfect Dark

The one everyone is waiting for. Due for an April release...the follow-up to GoldenEye could well be one of the most successful games ever.



StarCraft 64

The conversion of the top-selling PC real-time strategy game has been on the way for some time. Make sure you get yours first.



GAMEBOY COLOR



Army Man World War

You'll be able to take all your tiny green men wherever you go with 3D's handheld version of their flagship series.



NBA 2

Based on the Hit Men in Black franchise, this title is sure to be a hit with humans and aliens alike.



WCW Mayhem

All the action on the mats and off in the WCW-licensed game. Great gameplay with lots of options.



Monster Rancher Battle Cards

Following the trend of monster-raising games making good card battle games, this franchise gets reinvented for Game Boy.



Battlefield 3D

3D's popular tank bottling game comes to the handheld world with a distinctly old-school feel. Cruise around and blow stuff up.

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The Coolest Recent Releases



Time Stalkers

From the people who brought us the classic Genesis RPG, Landstalkers. Gorgeous visuals—and the added bonus of lots of VMU games.



Dead or Alive 2

The girls of Dead or Alive have always turned heads...but on the Dreamcast they look better than ever. Another great fighting game.



ECW Hardcore Revolution

Acclaim's WWF Attitude engine gets overhauled and packed with up-and-coming ECW fighters. More extreme, more violent...more, more, more.



Fear Effect

Eidos launches a new franchise with a cool Resident Evil-like adventure featuring groovy anime-style character art and Blade Runner-like story.



WWF Smackdown

THQ picks up the WWF license where Acclaim left off and brings us one of the most impressive-looking wrestling games yet.



Die Hard Trilogy 2

Follows the same format as the original, driving, shooting and 3D action. Completely new story though...nothing to do with the movies. Weird.



Pokemon Stadium

Train your Pokémon and load them up into your N64 with the Transfer Pak so you can battle it out in glorious 3D.



Carmageddon 64

Another violent car game—this time in a translation of the worldwide hit PC game. Perform cunning stunts, and run over pedestrians.



Mission: Impossible

One of the coolest products for the Game Boy ever. It's not just a game...turn your handheld into a mini PDA and remote control.



Resident Evil

No one believed it could be done...but the Game Boy version is incredible. The whole story...and even with speech.

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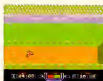
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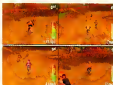


THE ORIGINAL

Excitebike, Nintendo's classic 1984 NES game, is still top-notch in our book. Check out the preview of the long-awaited sequel below.

Excitebike 64

These new screens may make the Excitebike 64 look like a regular ol' motocross title, but this one- to four-player game has more in common with the NES classic than we first thought. For starters, the original 2D Excitebike is contained here (and note you can now save your custom tracks—a feature missing from the original), along with a 3D, behind-the-bike version that captures the feel of the NES game perfectly. Excitebike 64 also packs an expansive desert level (much like the open stages in *Motocross Madness* for the PC), an oddball multiplayer soccer game and a hillclimbing event. Of course, you also get the standard motocross action seen in these screens, as well as a complex track editor. Developed by Nintendo-funded **Left Field Productions**, Excitebike 64 will be published by **Nintendo** in **May**.



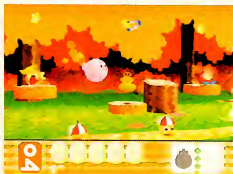
Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000

JMS 2000 features 16 official indoor and outdoor tracks plus 125 and 250 cc bikes. Other notables include: a custom track editor, four-player split screen, Create-a-Championship and a Stunt Ride Mode. Free-roaming through the practice areas (beaches, deserts and forests) is an interesting new feature as well. **Acclaim** will release JMS 2000 this **spring**.



Kirby 64

Nintendo released more screenshots of Kirby 64, set for stateside release in **June**. There were huge lines to play this for only a few minutes at last year's Space World in Japan—largely because of Kirby's popularity. The game has both standard side-scrolling levels and some with multiple layers of depth. And as always, he can suck up his enemies and use their special abilities or combine them with others.





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PS2

PREVIEW
GALLERY

WEB SHOOTER

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Summoner

With *Summoner*, **Voltion** and **THQ** want "to produce the most exciting and immersive role-playing experience for the PS2." And if looks alone could determine the validity of this statement...well, let's just say things are looking pretty sweet. This **fall 2000** release features an epic story line filled with tons of characters, plenty of amazing in-game cinematics and special effects, party-based multiplayer and more.



Reiselied: Ephemeral Fantasia

Originally scheduled for Dreamcast, **Konami's** *Reiselied* has jumped ship to PS2. Set for a **spring** release, this RPG reportedly has seamless transitions between gameplay and prerendered cutscenes and when characters move from one area to another. You control the main character, named **Maus**, as he vanquishes evil with a mighty blade.



Golf Paradise

Could *Golf Paradise* be the Hot Shots Golf equivalent on the PS2? From what we've seen of it so far, chances are pretty good. Talk to the green on a variety of pseudo-exotic locales. *GP* features six distinct playable characters who are able to earn money on the course, and upgrade their clubs and skills. Developed by **T&E Soft**, *Golf Paradise* is slated as a PS2 launch game on **March 4, 2000**.



Primal Image

Atlus has been running ads in the last few Weekly Famitsu for their PS2 launch title *Primal Image*. It's an interactive simulation that allows you to control a hot Japanese babe. Do it in **March**.





CAUTION: MAY NOT BE SUITABLE FOR PEOPLE WHO SUCK AT VIDEO GAMES.

If you're going to try playing Digimon World, you'd better make sure you're wearing two pairs of underpants. See, some of these Digimon are so viscious and twisted they were actually banned from television. That's okay with them, there are more things to blow up in video games anyway. Like you. So if you think you've got enough game for Digimon World, bring it. But don't say we didn't warn you.



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Gekikuukan Pro Baseball: At The End Of The Century 1999

Square enters the sports game arena on PlayStation2 with its Gekikuukan Pro Baseball, scheduled for a **March** release in Japan. The game looks incredibly realistic—you can tell that the PS2 makes a huge difference just in the way the characters move and the way players' uniforms wrinkle.

As soon as the pitch is delivered, the catcher becomes transparent (but still outlined) so you get a good view of the ball. Action is fast-paced and there's plenty of little animations after plays and home runs which add to the visual style of the game—looks a lot like you're watching a real game being broadcast on TV. Of course, the downside for those of us in the U.S. is that all the teams in the game are from Japan—but this is the first glimpse we've gotten of a baseball game on PS2. Now it'll be even more interesting to see what companies like Electronic Arts have in store for us.



HOW TO PICK A WINNING SOFTBALL TEAM #27.

"I'll take the fat guy, the girl,
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All Star Pro-Wrestling

Wrestling games have become as much a part of the video game scene in the U.S. as they are in Japan. **Square's All Star Pro-Wrestling** is just the first game to bodyslam its way onto PS2 this spring. Featuring stars of Japanese Professional Wrestling, it's got all their signature moves and animations—not to mention plenty of pain-filled grimaces to go around. The models here are way more detailed than we've seen in any wrestling game before, but the crowd action seems a little lacking. Compared to U.S. wrestling audiences, this thing is TAME! Where are the banners, where are the blunt objects being thrown into the ring? Despite the quieter tone, it still looks like Japanese wrestling fans will have plenty of in-the-ring action on PS2.



EX 3: The Street Fighter

Wow. The closer we get to the release of **EX 3**, the better it looks. Check out the level of detail (especially that picture of Chun-Li) in this latest batch of screens from **Capcom**. **EX 3: The Street Fighter** has new characters from the SF universe, tag team battles and three-on-one matches. All of this coming from a PS2 game that resides on just a CD-ROM! **EX 3** comes out this **March**.



SQUARE PS2 GAMES

Which of the following Square PS2 games are you most excited about?

Pro Baseball - 11%

Driving Emotion Type-S - 12%

All Star Pro-Wrestling - 25%

The Renacer - 53%

HARVEST MOON 64



Retire to the country for a new challenge in Harvest Moon 64. Hard work is rewarded as you struggle to bring prosperity back to a neglected farm. Work the land, pick up odd-jobs, and get to know the neighbors. The near-by town features horse and dog races, and numerous holiday festivals to keep your spirits soaring. Harvest Moon 64 has all the charm of the original Super Nintendo classic, plus many surprises.

- Tons of vegetables and livestock featured

- One of the town's five eligible women may prove to be the love of your life

- New items and gifts, and tools that increase in power as you master them

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NATSUME

Driving Emotion Type-S

As of this writing, PlayStation2's not even out yet and it has enough racing games to last it at least a year. But Square's getting into it with its own racer, Driving Emotion Type-S, scheduled for a release later this spring. Graphically, it looks great. It's very detailed, with a smooth and realistic in-the-car view which has just a touch of motion blur to the steering wheel/driver's hands. A variety of tracks include day/night through various terrain. What we saw and played at Square Millennium was fairly early, and Square needs to tighten up the control quite a bit still. It felt like driving on ice, but this will probably be cleaned up and tightened before its release. How can a driving game have emotion, anyway? Let's hope Square changes the name if and when this game gets a U.S. release.



Ridge Racer V

As we near the launch of the PS2, Namco's RRV has fast become our most anticipated launch game for the system. We're itching to do some exaggerated drifting around the bend. Plus, the power of the PS2 really helps flesh out RRV's exotic car designs. Below are some new gameplay shots...note the level of detail in the underpass architecture, or the smooth curvature of the tunnel walls. Sweet!



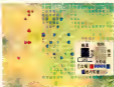
Buchigire Kongou

When you think of weird Japanese games, one company's name comes up more than any other—Artlink. From Mr. Domino to Tail of the Sun, this company has consistently baffled us with its original titles (very original, but of spotty quality). Headed to Japan this spring, Buchigire Kongou pits you against opponents in the construction yard using heavy equipment to fight—bulldozers, cranes; you name it, it's here.



Kessen

Koel's feudal magnum opus strategy sim looked great on paper, but then we saw it in motion a couple months ago and had deep reservations about it. Much of the animation looked stilted and while there were many combatants, none of them moved very convincingly. However, we still look forward to playing *Kessen* (who wouldn't want to play a Kurosawa movie?). Also keep in mind that some of the *Kessen* screenshots you've seen were culled from the game's excellent FMV sequences.



The Bouncer

Is it a game, is it a movie, or a little bit of both? Since **Square/Dream Factory's** *The Bouncer* wasn't playable at Square Millennium we still aren't sure. But what we do know is that it looks cool. Shown here are some cleaner screenshots than we had seen previously. Below is one of the *Matrix*-like sequences where the camera angle freezes the action and pans. We'll see more of this as it nears its **spring** Japanese release.



"The Critics have Spoken on the Action / Adventure Game of the Year!"



"A technical achievement...Soul Reaver
delivers an epic piece of
vampiric literature...93%"
- IGN.com

"Soul Reaver is a deep game,
possessed with a myriad of
impressive little touches...9/10"
- VideoGames.com

"3D exploration and adventure
at its finest...Game of the Month."
- Expert Gamer Magazine

"Soul Reaver's environment's are jaw dropping."
- Gaming-Age.com

"98%"
- PS Extreme Magazine

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✦ Engage your creator, Kain,
in an epic struggle for dominance

✦ Dark gothic story

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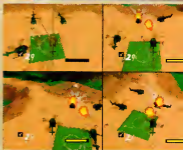


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Vagrant Story

Publisher:	Square EA
Developer:	Square
Players:	1
Genre:	Action/Adventure/RPG
% Done:	60%
Release:	Spring 2000
Age Re:	None
Web Address:	www.squaresoft.com
The Good:	Just about everything.
The Bad:	Just about nothing.
And The Up:	Sydney's withered little pecc.



The battle system is truly unique, seamlessly bringing effective turn-based RPG battle to a more action-oriented world.



Agent Riot squares off against a massive crab summoned from the bowels of hell. Where's a hammer when you need one?

CUSTOMIZATION

Building A Better Ashley



Don't let the name fool you—es an elite agent, Ashley has a couple deadly tricks up his sleeve. Taking a page from Square's own Parasite Eve, Ashley can dismantle weapons and build stronger ones from the pieces.

Weapons can only be created in a scant few "Factories" throughout the game, but building weapons effective against the game's six enemy classes is an important component to success. Some weapons have slots of gems that will allow Ashley to change weapon attributes on the fly, but nothing beats rolling your own and then getting to name it.

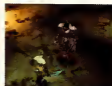
Let's just get it out of the way—Vagrant Story is a phenomenal, ground-breaking game. Square has truly beaten all odds and successfully melded the action, adventure and RPG genres to produce a seamless and epic game unlike any other.

A brutal battle wages between the Knights of the Crimson Blade and the Mullenkamp Cult in the city of Lea Monde. Players assume the role of Ashley Riot, an agent for the Valendia Knights of Peace's elite "Riskbreaker" unit. After a chance encounter with the heartless leader of the Mullenkamp Cult, Sydney Losstaro, Ashley finds himself in a life-or-death game of cat and mouse amidst a deeper, more sinister plot larger than the two of them.

While there's no need to be stealthy in Vagrant Story, one can't help feel that Vagrant Story is really "Medieval Gear Solid." Players lurk around dungeons and towns, fighting monsters with a variety of weapons and recovering information and keys to aid their pursuit of Sydney. You navigate

around the world as you would in Metal Gear Solid, guiding the character with the analog pad and rotating the viewpoint. Ashley can switch in and out of Battle Mode, freeing his hands for tasks such as lifting boxes or grabbing edges. While navigating the labyrinthine corridors under Lea Monde is all done in real time, battling is a decidedly different affair.

Tapping the attack button pauses the game and causes a large wireframe sphere to erupt from Ashley's body. Any targetable item within the sphere can be attacked. While smaller enemies may only have one attackable segment, you can attack any individual limb of larger monsters and humanoid. Beyond standard attacks, Ashley can deal damage with two other attack variants. Chain Abilities allow Ashley to perform consecutive hits when attacking enemies, with every additional attack benefiting Ashley in ways other than sheer damage. For example, you can restore magic points or life with a carefully timed chain attack. Ashley can ready up to three of these at a time and chain them until the



Action, adventure and battle are the name of the game—Ashley will have to hack through legions of monstrosities to catch up with Sydney.

CHANGE OF PACE



The team responsible for Vagrant Story, oddly enough, is none other than those responsible for Square's tactical masterpiece, Final Fantasy Tactics. The influences of artist Akihiko Yoshida and composer Hitoshi Sakimoto are especially noticeable and welcome.



Like Metal Gear Solid, Vagrant Story intertwines its gameplay with a number of real-time cinematics to immerse you into the story.

target keels over, with the proper timing, Break Arts, learned after gaining considerable experience, allow Ashley to sacrifice some of his own life meter to inflict massive damage upon an enemy. You can defer the cost of an enemy attack with Defense Abilities. When attacked, hitting the appropriate button with the correct timing can reflect the attack, absorb the magic or defend against a particular element. Finally, as Ashley progresses to and through the dark city of Lea Monde, many enemies will drop pages from the legendary spellbook Grimon. Each page contains a single spell that will be memorized once read. Magic falls into four categories, such as attack, healing and status magic. Yeah, that's a lot of options, but one of

Vagrant Story's most impressive feats is the relatively clutterless and intuitive interface they've managed to compress them into.

Vagrant Story is one of the most beautifully cinematic games to date, easily topping Metal Gear Solid. With character designs by the venerable artist behind Final Fantasy Tactics' noseless wonders, Akihiko Yoshida, Vagrant Story looks and feels like a living 3D comic brought to life. Each model is fluidly animated and textured with a sketch-like quality giving the game a visual feel all its own. Topped off with impressive lighting and spell effects, Vagrant Story is a feast for the eyes. Adding to the game's cinematic charm is yet another impressive score by Hitoshi Sakimoto, one of Final Fantasy Tactics' dual composers. From an audio standpoint, the only thing conceivably missing is voice—while the jagged comic dialog boxes have a certain charm, one can't help but think this game could be more impressive with voice. However, avoiding Metal Gear Solid's glut of dialog is a plus.

Vagrant Story is nothing short of revolutionary. While a fairly short game, the depth and density of the story and experiences contained within give Vagrant Story an intensity missing from most longer games, as well as a higher replay value. Just released in Japan, Vagrant Story is fortunately slated for a quick turnaround and should be arriving in stores this May. 🚗



THE STAR CHARACTERS

And In This Corner, We Have...



Ashley Riot

Ashley was valedictorian of his academy class, but he didn't go straight into the dangerous and elite group, the Riskbreakers. It wasn't until after his family was brutally murdered did he join. With nothing to lose, Ashley became the most skilled of the Riskbreakers. He's a silent, brooding man—little else is known about this formidable warrior.



Sydney Losstarot

The leader of the Mullenkamp Cult, Sydney Losstarot is an undead machination of flesh and metal. Sydney possesses great demon-like powers allowing him to summon beasts from the ether and manipulate people's minds. What is the source of his power? Has he found the legendary Gran Grimon?



PREVIEW

MediEvil II

Publisher:	SCEA
Developer:	SCEE
Players:	1
Genre:	Action
% Done:	65%
Release:	May 2000
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.playstation.com
The Good:	A 3D action game not hampered by slowdown? It can't be...
The Bad:	The camera can be pretty tricky to manage at times.
And The Gulp:	Sir Dan isn't going to win any beauty pageants, but the ladies are still impressed by his interchangeable "parts."



Sir Dan now has the ability to climb ladders (and looks amusingly like a frog doing it).



Most weapons have two attacks. While not entirely original, a spinning sword attack is definitely always useful.

SOLVING PUZZLES

Some Assembly Required

Sir Dan possesses an often-overlooked advantage of being undead: the ability to dismember himself at any time without consequence. Part of your puzzle-solving strategy will have to make use of Dan's dislocated head to scout out possible solutions (his hands are pretty busy, too).



It's not often we see a game from the developers at Sony Computer Entertainment Europe. The most notable offering from the boys across the pond was *MediEvil*, released back in the fall of 1998. In the follow-up to that sleeper success, the honorable Sir Daniel Fortesque returns to do battle in a twisted portrayal of Victorian London. The spell book of Zorok has been obtained by Lord Palethorne, and like a good villain should, he promptly raises the dead and causes widespread havoc. And as with most tales of a potential apocalypse, there's only one man who can stop him: Sir Dan. The story is told through interspersed real-time cinemas, and Dan has a number of new allies to help him on his quest.



MediEvil II retains the basic gameplay foundation of its predecessor, but with an expanded emphasis on puzzle solving and exploration. Sir Dan acquires a new arsenal of weapons and abilities, such as a speed dash and the ability to climb. Our interchangeable hero can use different parts of his body in order to accomplish the task at hand (in Dan's case, a severed hand). At one point in the game, Dan has his head stolen and must use the "DanCam" (a first-person perspective from Dan's head) to find out where it is. Another advantage that self-decapitation gives you is the ability to place your noggin' on top of a severed hand, enabling you to go on reconnaissance missions and letting you squeeze in otherwise unattainable locations (comparable to the remote-control car in *Ape Escape*). By defeating a certain amount of enemies on a level, you can collect the Chalice of Souls, which can then be traded for new weapons like the Gatling gun, Cane-stick and Magic Sword. Aside from their regular attacks, most weapons have a charge-up attack that does more damage.

The graphics engine has been improved from the original, the animation system being the most notable upgrade. The only glaring problem at this point may be the camera system—it's not always at the best possible angle. In any case, fans of the original *MediEvil* won't have much to worry about come May. 🐸



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When Bitterness Stains the Land
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Koudelka

Publisher:	SNK
Developer:	Sacnoth
Players:	1
Genre:	Adventure/RPG
% Done:	80%
Release:	April 2000
Also On:	None
Web Address:	www.snkusa.com
The Good:	The atmosphere.
The Bad:	The battle system.
And The Ugly:	The sheer twistedness of some of the monsters.



Dark enough for you? Koudelka combines gameplay elements from both the Final Fantasy and Resident Evil series and mixes it with heaping spoonfuls of atmosphere and poorly lit scenery. The Nematon Monastery doesn't take kindly to strangers, it seems.

CHARACTER STATS

Grow Your Own Hero



Considering that it's a relatively short role-playing game, Koudelka has a surprising amount of depth. Every time your characters level up, you get four points to freely distribute among their stats. Think Koudelka's too weak as a fighter? Up her strength accordingly.

In addition to the core statistics, each character is proficient with a variety of different weapons and spells. The more often you use a particular type of weapon or spell, the more powerful that character becomes when using it. For example, a person with a Level 1 proficiency with fists can strike twice in the same turn for double the amount of damage.

SNK's primarily been known for its arcade and handheld games, but Koudelka marks the beginning of a new era for this struggling-yet-talented publisher. Koudelka has some gameplay issues, but the game is certainly an impressive production.

Developed by Sacnoth, a team formed of renegade Square employees, Koudelka is a gothic adventure/RPG in the vein of Resident Evil and Final Fantasy. Set in the late 1800s in the Nematon Monastery of Aberystwyth, Wales, the story centers around a gypsy medium named Koudelka. Heeding a spiritual call from the beyond, she arrives at the dilapidated monastery and is swept up into a sea of mystery, intrigue and bloodshed.

The gameplay is more RPG than anything, but it uses the atmospheric and inventory conventions of the survival horror genre to make it a unique one at that. As players navigate the Nematon monastery,

they face random encounters with a variety of hell's minions. The battle system combines standard RPG combat with the character positioning more commonly found in tactical strategy games, usually resulting in slower-paced battles. Each character can use every weapon or spell, but it pays to specialize (Each type of weapon or spell has its own experience level, rewarding players for consistent usage). One cue taken from the survival horror genre is the notion of durability—any hand-to-hand weapon takes damage from attacks and will eventually break, forcing players to conserve attacks.

As one might expect from a team of former Square employees, Koudelka is quite graphically polished. While the character designs are nice, Koudelka's real star is the monastery itself. Oozing darkness and atmosphere, Koudelka is a game best played with the lights out. The battles are presented in real-time 3D, sporting detailed and well-textured models. The game also has a number of impressive CG movies as well. Koudelka's sound is typical for the genre—moody background music and hammy voice acting. Oddly enough, everyone has an American accent, despite it being late 19th-century England.

Koudelka gets off to a slow start, but has plenty of surprises in store for the persistent player. Despite its flaws, Koudelka should make an interesting addition to the libraries of both RPG and survival horror fans when SNK USA releases it this April.



In addition to being inappropriately dressed for demon hunting, Koudelka also has quite the smart mouth for a 19th-century woman.



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inspired by Marc Chagall's 'Les Femmes d'Alger'



by Marc Chagall



EVIL QUIZ

Which one of these is NOT an Ash-ism?

- Hail to the king, baby.
- I'm here to chew bubblegum and kick ass. And I'm all out of bubblegum.
- Groovy.
- Come get some.
- Who's laughing now?

© THQ

Evil Dead: Hail to the King

Fans of the psychotic *Evil Dead* trilogy will be pleased to hear that Heavy Iron Studios is working on an *Evil Dead* game that takes place a few years after the madness in *Army of Darkness*. Ash (to be voiced by none other than Bruce Campbell) must return to the infamous cabin in the woods to battle the evil forces that are crossing over into our world, no thanks to the Necronomicon, a.k.a. the Book of the Dead.

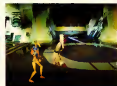
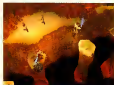
The game boasts full-motion, layered 2D backgrounds, 24-bit textures, upgradable weapons, non-linear gameplay, puzzle solving and all the humor and gory action that made the Sam Raimi flicks such cult favorites.

We'll have more on THQ's highly anticipated fall release in an upcoming issue.



Star Wars: Episode I Jedi Power Battles

The best part about the otherwise mediocre *Phantom Menace* game was the lightsaber battles, right? LucasArts has cleverly decided to capitalize on this and is working on a more action-oriented game set for release in the **spring**.



TOO MUCH?

7 In little more than a year 3DO will have introduced seven games under the Army Men brand across PC, PS and N64.

Army Men: World War

3DO just won't give up with the Army Men franchise will they? Whether we're interested or not they're going to keep beating us over the head with it until we submit. World War is technically the "sequel" to the distinctly mediocre Army Men 3D. Think 3D action with lots of shooting, but this time with a lot of emphasis placed on co-op play (cool!) and additional strategic elements. Watch for the game in **March**.



Speed Punks

Who said the PlayStation is lacking in the cartoon racer genre? This one from **SCEA** and **FunCom** features bratty kid racers in souped-up go-karts and—as you might expect—lots of turbos, offensive and defensive power-ups, and themed tracks. Speed Punk's overall feel, speedy frame-rate and incredible graphics are on par (and seem to be just as enjoyable) as those in CTR. The game also features a variety of two- to four-player modes. Look for this one around the **middle of April**.



*Dear John,
I've met
someone else
Good luck
Betty B*

**Old flames die
out, but I can
always make
new ones.**

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ORIGINAL RMAP

Rhapsody is the U.S. name for Puppet Princess of *Mar's Kingdom*, originally released in Japan by Nippon Ichi Software at the end of 1998. It was re-released in September last year with an "omake" disc featuring illustrations, music and more.

Need For Speed: Porsche Unleashed

We were surprised EA went with the complete Porsche package for *Unleashed*, but the more we played, the more we liked. Every Porsche from the 1948 356 Roadster to the 2000 996 Turbo are included (over 50 total) in this game. Race options include a highly detailed Evolution Mode where purchasing and modifying vehicles is affected by the economy, inflation plus supply and demand. The *Unleashed* Mode is similar to the *Driver* format as well as other mission-based racers. Four player multi-tap and over 40 tracks and segments round out the highlights. EA will release *Need For Speed: Porsche Unleashed* this **March**.



Vanishing Point

Acclaim and Clockwork Games will have *Vanishing Point* ready for release this **May**. What is it? Well...you're in luck because it's another "real" racing game filled with licensed cars. What's different about it? Well...it features lots of "stunts" aside from the racing, plus the graphics engine is apparently so advanced that there is virtually no polygon pop-up at any time. Acclaim has high hopes for the game.



Superbike 2000

EA's *Superbike 2000* is the sequel to last year's mediocre *Superbike World Championship*. Thankfully it looks like a complete rebuild. The bikes are much larger and the racers appear more life-like. Real riders, motorcycles and teams from the 1999 SWC are used. Cut your teeth on 13 circuits including Laguna Seca, Monza and several others. This two-player capable game is slated for a **spring 2000** release.



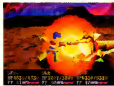
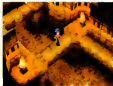


REMEMBER WHEN

Sept. 30, 1955, James Dean crashed head-on into another car while racing his new Porsche Spyder. Legend has it the car was haunted.

Wild ARMS 2

In the early days of the PS when there weren't a lot of RPGs (before Final Fantasy VII came out), the first Wild ARMS emerged onto the scene. **Contrail**, developers of the first game and Legend of Legaia, are at it again in this sequel, scheduled for a **May** release from **SCEA**. Similar to the first game (yet improved), you select from three characters to begin the adventure at three different points. Wild ARMS 2 improves upon the first game and features enough action and battles to keep RPG fans busy for weeks.



Rhapsody: A Musical Adventure

Sing your way to victory in this latest RPG from Japan, coming from **Atlus** in **May**. In it, you star as Comet, a girl searching for her true love in Mar's Kingdom. Using music she defeats enemies and brings them to her side (you can collect over 20 monsters and puppets). It features a strategy-style battle interface and magic like the "Pancake Attack."



Always preferred my weapon to my woman anyway.



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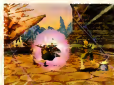
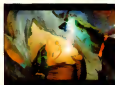


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Did you know there is actually a professional women's softball league. The Tampa Bay Firestix ('99 champs), the Virginia Roadsters and the Akron Racers are just a few of the many teams in the WPSL.

The Legend of Dragoon

Released back in December in Japan, SCEI's four-disc RPG *The Legend of Dragoon* heads to the U.S. via SCEA in June. Forty minutes of well-crafted CG movies advance the story in what Sony estimates to be an 80-hour game. The game features an "Additional" system, which allows you to attack multiple times in one sequence and can be used in both human and Dragoon forms (each character can use Dragoon magic).



WTC: World Touring Car

Codemasters continues to impress with each new release and the *May* unveiling of *World Touring Car* will be no exception. Taking the TOCA engine to the furthest extreme, the new game features cars from around the world in racing guise and will be one of the first major licensed racing games that will let you smash up cool cars like the Audi TT and groovy-looking Alfa Romeos. There are even some Detroit monsters featured too.



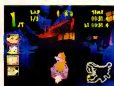
Sammy Sosa Softball Slam

Well this is a first...a softball game, endorsed by Sammy Sosa no less. We're not sure if we should be interested or horrified. Whatever the case, *Softball Slam* features coed, female and male teams (eight total). The emphasis is on quick play and goofy fun rather than stats, cumbersome options and realistic detail. This is a slugfest with an incredibly simple learning curve. 3DO will release this unique title in February.



WDW: Magical Racing Quest

That's Walt Disney World in case you couldn't figure it out. ThisCTR-like multiplayer racer features beloved Disney characters like Chip and Dale, Jimmy Cricket and others. As you'd expect, tracks are inspired by theme rides at Disney World like *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Space Mountain* and more. The PlayStation version features a two-player split-screen mode. Look for it in March from Eidos and Crystal Dynamics.



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- Race on the street and in the dirt using 16 authentic race bikes from *Kawasaki, Yamaha and Honda.*
- Unlock hidden bikes and bonus courses by winning race seasons in Championship Mode.



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fear effect

IT CAN RECOGNIZE YOUR FEAR...CAN YOU?

This month we've decided to give you a brief look at the amazing art generated to make this massive game. The art team at Kranas Digital Entertainment began with highly detailed 2D sketches, followed by a rendered 3D model in low resolution, and finalized in high resolution with the various background animations. Over 600 backgrounds were created for the seven locations resulting in a game unlike anything seen on the PlayStation. Enjoy...

Downtown Hong Kong

THE GAMEPLAY TAKES PLACE OVER FULL MOTION VIDEO SEQUENCES CREATING A WORLD FILLED WITH MOVEMENT RANGING FROM FLASHING BILLBOARDS TO INTENSE HELICOPTER CHASE SCENES.

Hong Kong Harbor



THE MOST ALIVE AND ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS
YET TO BE SEEN IN A VIDEO GAME.

The Bak Sik River

Dai Yo Temple

ORIGINAL ANIME STYLE CHARACTER DESIGN.

HELL...



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WHAT IF...

Shaba Games decided to have that Eric guy who used to host *The Grind* on MTV as a celebrity sponsor for *Grind Session*? That'd be weird.

Mobil 1 Rally Championship

It seems EA has taken a shine to rally sims lately, first *V-Rally* now *Mobil 1*. This one is based entirely on the British Rally Championship. There are 36 stages, each created to mirror the terrain and roadways of the actual race. More than 20 licensed cars including the Honda Civic, VW Golf and Nissan Almera grace the roads. We can tell you right now that *Mobil 1 Rally* has very sensitive control. We'll see how the final turns out this spring.



Major League Baseball 2001

We can't say this game offers anything substantially different than most MLB-licensed PlayStation titles other than the trademark FOX Sports style and wit. Tim McCarver and Joe Buck handle the pregame, play-by-play and post-game analysis as only they can. Play Modes include: Exhibition, Season, Playoff, World Series and Home Run Derby. Look for this FOX Sports Interactive title sometime this spring.



Test Drive Le Mans

Infogrames' *TD Le Mans* has been in development for a long time. And with the exception of the "turn-on-a-pivot" handling it's not bad at all. The frame-rate is fast and smooth with little graphic pop-up. Featured are: GT 1, GT2 and prototype vehicles (50+ total) and the actual Le Mans track. Seven additional courses plus authentic Le Mans atmosphere (including night-to-day progressions) round out this March release title.



Grind Session

If you've played *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater*, then you know basically what to expect from *Grind Session*—the two are very similar in looks and control. But of course to be fair to **Shaba Games** and **SCEA**, *Grind Session* is a completely different game when it comes to modes and what not. For example, one mode allows up to eight players to take turns in a competition for high trick points. Look for it in May.





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BattleTanx: Global Assault

The post-apocalyptic tank blow-up-everything-you-see N64 game is making its way to the PlayStation this **spring**, courtesy of **3DO**. It's pretty much the same experience (again, blow up everything you see), only without the four-player support—Global Assault will have a variety of two-player cooperative and not-so-cooperative modes. It's fun and addicting, in a mindless, arcade-action sort of way.



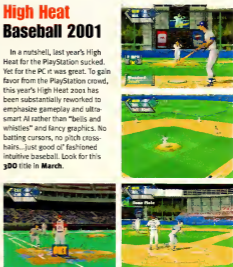
Technomage

German developer **Sunflowers** is bringing out this expansive RPG adventure sometime **early in 2000** in the U.K. The game spans eight different worlds, each with its own graphical style and level make-up. Overall, there will be some 50 levels to explore, and a load of stuff to interact with. As you'd expect—like any good RPG—your main character gains experience and various magics and items as he battles enemies and converses with townsfolk. Expect a good deal of special effects.



High Heat Baseball 2001

In a nutshell, last year's High Heat for the PlayStation sucked. Yet for the PC it was great. To gain favor from the PlayStation crowd, this year's High Heat 2001 has been substantially reworked to emphasize gameplay and ultra-smart AI rather than "bells and whistles" and fancy graphics. No batting cursors, no pitch cross-hairs...just good ol' fashioned intuitive baseball. Look for this **3DO** title in **March**.



Space Debris

Rage Software (Incoming, Expendable) is currently working on a space-based action shoot-'em up (like Colony Wars). Space Debris has players taking on the role of a United Earth Defense officer attempting to ward off a possible alien invasion. You'll have six ships and five modes from which to choose. Right now, Space Debris is set for a **Q3 release** in the U.K. with no U.S. announcements made yet.



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TASTE THE RIBBON ON THE WEB

Vib-Ribbon (previewed below) is one of those games you gotta experience to get—like PaRappa was. Visit <http://www.scei.co.jp/sdz/vibrribbon/> to get an idea of what it is. You may have to blindly click around if you don't know Japanese, but it'll be worth the visit.

Biohazard: Gun Survivor

It must be said that **Capcom's** latest survival horror adventure on the PS was the most disappointing game we couldn't tear ourselves away from. The action takes place in a first-person POV, while all the controls (moving and shooting) are handled by a Namco GunCon. Pretty brilliant, right? Well, sort of. Using the gun to move around in the thick of the action can be downright unintuitive. We found it much easier to use an analog controller when it came to some of the bigger bosses. Other disappointments included severely limited background interaction, and poor zombie animation. However, for fans of RE, *Gun Survivor* definitely has enough tie-ins to keep you glued. Aside from a familiar assortment of weapons, you'll recognize your favorite monsters (Cleaners, Lickers, Tyrants, etc.) making a cameo. Capcom has already announced that *Gun Survivor* won't make it overseas as a "shooting game." You won't be able to use your GunCon with the U.S. version, so better send Capcom an angry e-mail right now!



Vib-Ribbon

Vib-Ribbon is the latest game from **SCEI** and developer **NaNoOn-Sha**, the same team that brought us *PaRappa* and *UmJammer Lammy*. It's a music game, but a little bit different than either of those titles. At first glance, this game looks like crap. Graphically speaking, *Vib-Ribbon* isn't that impressive. It's entirely in vector graphics. You play as this rabbit-type character who has to jump, twirl, step and loop his way through a world created entirely by the beats and speed of music. You press a button that corresponds to the type of obstacle he has to get past (there are four of them). But the cool part is that obstacles can be mixed, so in those cases you have to press two buttons simultaneously.

That's not even the best part. The game itself comes with a few songs, but you can insert your own music CDs to come up with brand-new levels for each song on them. This adds almost infinite playability to the game, since any new CD you have means new levels to play. It's a shame this game will likely never come out in the U.S.



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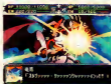
Card Captor Sakura

Arika, the same company that brought us games like Street Fighter EX and Tetris The Grand Master, has taken on Card Captor Sakura (available now in Japan). Based on a manga and anime series by Japanese artist trio CLAMP, it's an action-puzzle game where you throw out matching-colored cards to capture rows of cards as they advance. You can set up combos and patterns for more points and cast special attacks.



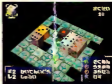
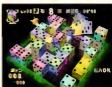
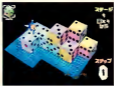
Super Robot Wars Alpha

Bandai's highly anticipated SRW Alpha on the PS is shaping up to be the finest chapter in the SRW series yet. SRW Alpha features much of what you'd expect from a SRW game: turn-based strategic gameplay, an amalgamation of mecha, both old and new, doing battle in super-deformed and dramatic 2D cinemas. New additions include the Gumbuster! SRW Alpha will be out at the end of February.



XI Jumbo

...that's Devil Dice 2 to you and me. This sequel improves upon the original in so many ways, it boggles the mind. It has new, funky dice (like black magnetic ones that drag other pieces along with them) and special moves that open up new dimensions in gameplay. For example, you can now pick up dice and set them down or throw them across the stage. You can also roll dice on top of others, to form two levels of mayhem. The import CD is out (by SCEI), but a U.S. release is TBD.



Chaos Break

Survival horror rears its ugly head once again. This time, the plot is highly reminiscent of Dino Crisis, with a dash of Carrier. You're special agent Mitsuki, dropped onto ground zero of biohazard hell. Unlike other survival horror titles, the gameplay in Chaos Break is a bit faster-paced, hence more arcade-like. There are still puzzles to be solved (and plenty of cheese whiz dialogue), but all the backgrounds are rendered in real time. Chaos Break, by Taito, is out now and available for import.



"Death is ultimately an act of grace
and love from the Lord.
A blessing is it not?"

KOUFUKA



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PREVIEW GALLERY

Perfect Dark

Set for release this winter, Rare's GB version of Perfect Dark chronicles Joanna Dark's past as she finishes her training. Set in the South American jungle, the game has Joanna chasing after cyborgs and trying to destroy a robot factory. Watch for cool features galore...FMV, speech, infrared and printer support, rumble cart and two-player deathmatching. By beating this game, you can even open up new modes in the N64 cart (and vice versa), using the Transfer Pak.



Warlocked

Dust off your link cables. Developer BITS is readying Warlocked, the GBC's first real-time strategy game, which Nintendo will publish by the end of 2000. This thing borrows heavily from Warcraft II. You pick either the human or monster race and play a dozen single-player missions with each, or you can link up and battle a pal. You're assigned random wizard types, such as one who turns enemies to gold. Trade these wizards with others or engage in instant statistical battles through the IR port.



Wario Land III

Wario will be back on the GBC in May, and he's up to no good (as usual). Nintendo's antihero ventures off to a music box world and must transform himself—fat, thin, on fire, etc.—to get through the game's 25 levels. There are plenty of things to get in his way, too. But evil will win out in this game because good is dumb.



Looney Tunes Collector: Alert!

Here is Infogrames' answer to Pokémon: In an effort to thwart Marvin Martian's plot to blow up Earth, Bugs Bunny must travel through 20 stages "collecting" Looney Tune characters (who will help out in the quest). The adventure portion is Zelda-ish in nature, while the collecting part opens up new gameplay ideas (Elmer Fudd has a gun, Witch Hazel has a flying broom, etc.). You can even trade characters with other players, to complete your collection of 47 toonies. Alert! is due out in June.



In Stores March 2000

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RISE OF THE BLACK DOGS

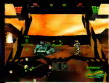
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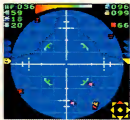
Metal Slug: 2nd Mission

Those of you who enjoyed the pocket treatment of **SNK's** classic Metal Slug series last year are in for a treat. 2nd Mission features three game modes (Story, Rescue List and Time Attack), 38 stages, two characters to choose from, and multiple paths to finish the game. It's another strong title for the NGPC. Unfortunately, Metal Slug: 2nd Mission won't be out until **Q2 2000**.



Dive Alert

Dive Alert is a strategic submarine simulation RPG from **SNK**. The earth is toast. All the polar ice caps have melted. It's up to you to pilot your sub to Terra, the last city on earth. You navigate strictly by sonar, buying new equipment with money you've won from battles and gaining experience. Battle Mode allows you to play head-to-head to obtain certain supplies, money and even your opponent's sub and navigator. DA is due out this **spring**.



Faselei

Since Square hasn't yet shown any inclination to develop for the Neo-Geo Pocket Color, gamers might feel as if they never have that particular brand of gaming goodness on their shiny new handhelds. Well, developer **Sacnoth** is coming to your rescue, with the arrival of not only Dive Alert (see above), but Faselei as well.

Fans of Square's Front Mission series will find themselves right at home here, with fully customizable mechs to complement the strategy-RPG gameplay. Players command Toy Soldiers in a tale of political upheaval and royal obligation. As your prince's right-hand man, it is up to you to restore peace to the land of Faselei.

SNK will release Faselei in the U.S. this **spring**.



Puzzle Link 2

This simple puzzle game has you firing linkable connectors to clear targets scattered throughout the game screen. It plays just like the first game (released this past winter), only with more and different modes of play. **SNK** will be bringing this one out during the **second quarter of this year**.



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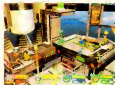
18 Wheeler: American Pro Trucker

Sega's latest in its "occupation" series has you driving an 18 wheeler, delivering goods, beating the clock, and causing general chaos everywhere you go. Chalk it up as a Japanese obsession with all things "Americana," but something about this game just kicks ass. Maybe we've been watching too much *Smokey & The Bandit*. APT is out **now** in Japan.



Power Stone 2

The fact that three out of four arcade games featured this month are powered by Sega's Naomi system has all of us excited about the future of the Dreamcast. **Capcom's** Power Stone 2 will feature bigger, more sophisticated battle arenas, a deeper control system, four-player simultaneous play and plenty of tap-tap-tap combos to keep Jimmy happy out there. Expect a DC release shortly after the arcade hits this **spring**.



SEQUELS GALORE

Which of the following upcoming arcade fighting game sequels are you most looking forward to?

Marvel vs. Capcom 2	1388
Guilty Gear 2	196
Soul Calibur 2	3409
Power Stone 2	505

Source: videogames.com online poll

Marvel vs. Capcom 2

Here are some more screens for one of our most anticipated 2D fighters this year. *MvC2* will feature the sort of heady 2D overload you'd expect from a CPS3 lovefest; except this time, **Capcom** has also given arcade goers the option of hooking up their DC VMUs to record scores, fighting history and customization information. *MvC2* will see a close to simultaneous release with its DC counterpart this **March** in Japan.



Aqua Rush

No, **Namco's** latest game isn't *Soul Calibur 2*. Instead, it's a traditional puzzle game. Match the gelatinous shapes and obliterate all your pieces. *AR* is out **now** in Japan...and will probably hit PS.



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-TERRY JACKSON

Even though the NFL was turned completely upside down this year as once-mighty teams fell and new powerhouses emerged, only one thing remained constant—EA SPORTS' annual Madden Bowl. NFL players from across the league broved



Son Frandso 49er Terry Jackson proved to everyone he had what it takes to walk away with the goods, the Madden Bowl 2000 trophy.



Atlanta's rare ice and snow to show off their digital gridiron skills in the 6th annual Madden World Championship at the pocked Celebrity Rock Cafe. Son Frandso 49er rookie running back Terry Jackson demonstrated that his on-the-field football experience paid off big-time as he took down long-time MLB (and NFL wonno-be?) player Derek Bell, outfielder for the New York Mets 50 to 35, in the final championship round.

PRO TOURNAMENT



Detroit Lions quarterback Charlie Batch is sitting pretty, but Cincinnati Bengal Willie Jackson can't believe the call.



ERIC GREENLEE

"It's fun! John Madden Football is something we all do when we go home after practice. There are guys on my team who can't go a week without it and they have to bring it on the road when we travel."



JAMAL ANDERSON

"They started Madden Bowl years ago, and as time goes on, more and more guys who play the game want to get involved in it. I think just getting all the guys here from different teams and the fellowship that comes from that is what makes it so popular."





Last year's Madden Bowl winner, NY Jet Ray Mickens, causes Cardinal Simeon Rice much grief during their game, while Atlanta Falcon Jamal Anderson gets the reaction on the mike.



SF 49er Terry Jackson pumps his fist after a score against NY Met Derek Bell during the championship game.



CHRIS LEVA LEVO

"You take it on the road with you, you take it home with you. If you aren't actually playing football on the field, you gotta take it home and play it all night before you go to bed."

The Madden Bowl national anthem, Intro song from Madden NFL 2000, is sung by Chris Leva Levo, a.k.a. Ludaeris.



Philadelphia Eagle Tra Thomas shares a laugh with Tony Gonzalez of the Kansas City Chiefs during their game.

Madden Bowl Photography by Alan McIvor

**"IT'S KIND OF LIKE THE RAMS AND THE TITANS MAKING IT TO THE SUPER BOWL. NOBODY SAW IT COMING, AND NOBODY SAW THE SUCCESS OF THE MADDEN BOWL COMING. IT'S HUGE."
- JOHN MADDEN**

perfect dark is finally, finally done. egm finds out what took so dang long and whether joanna dark can fill jim bond's big shoes.

Every developer dreams of working on a game until it's finished." Mark Edmonds, Perfect Dark's producer at England-based developer Rare, told us. "We get to do that, and it works out really well for us."

Sure, but does it work out as well for Nintendo 64 owners stuck waiting for Perfect Dark, Rare's much-anticipated sequel to the best-selling GoldenEye 007? Nintendo pushed back PD's release so many times we feared arthritis would seriously hinder our play experience when the game was finally, finally released. And when Nintendo announced last year that Perfect Dark's shipping date was slipping again, from Christmas '99 to April 2000, we were nearly buried beneath readers' outraged letters demanding to know why.

Well, we have good news, and more good news, and even more good news, and only a tiny bit of bad news. Perfect Dark's release date is solidly locked at April 10. The extra features Rare crammed into the game—which we'll get to in a moment—are worth the wait. Perfect Dark, in every imaginable way, improves on GoldenEye. You will not be disappointed.

But let's get the bad news outta the way first. Remember the "Perfect Head" face-mapping mode Nintendo touted at 1999's E3? This revolutionary feature let you snap a pic of your noggin with your Game Boy Camera and then paste the mug shot—via the Transfer Pak—onto your multiplayer character in Perfect Dark. Unfortunately, Rare recently removed face mapping from the game. Nintendo claims the feature never worked flawlessly, even added Expansion Pak support wasn't enough to keep Perfect Dark from crashing every time testers loaded a custom head. "It's something [Rare] tried very hard to fix," said Ken Lobb, producer of Perfect Dark at Nintendo. "They didn't know how long it would take to fix. They couldn't give us a time. So we said, 'We understand. Save it for Dolphin.'"

Funny thing is, EGM editors played a few deathmatch rounds at E3 using the Perfect Head feature. The game seemed to work fine then, which makes us wonder now if maybe other, more recent social considerations are at work here. It's not hard to imagine players mapping teachers' or parents' faces onto deathmatch characters. (Heck, we ourselves planned a sidebar crammed with mugshots of desirable deathmatch foes such as Jar Jar Binks, Monica Lewinski, and Joseph Lieberman.) Perhaps Nintendo envisioned this scenario as well, considered the possible public outcry and got cold feet about the whole face mapping thing.

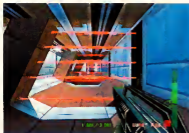
Still, when you consider the features Rare has added, the loss of Perfect Head is really no big whup. Lobb said the game was specifically delayed past Christmas so Rare could tweak the one-player story mode with two new features—a two-player cooperative option and a unique Counter-Operative mode. You heard us right: You'll be able to play through Perfect Dark's gripping story in split screen with a second

woman with the

Written by Crispin Boyer
Illustrations by Allan Ditzig



Golden Gun



See that split-screen mode to the left? That's why you had to wait an extra four months for *Perfect Dark*. But seeing as how the Cooperative and Counter-operative modes will add months to PD's replay value, we figure they were worth the wait.



GoldenEye's enemies act like special-ed dropouts compared to *Perfect Dark's* super-smart army. Enemies'll run up and steal your weapons. They dive out of the way right when you line 'em up for a headshot. They act suitably stunned when you turn out the lights and doo night vision to hunt you in the dark. And wait 'til you go against simulators set at the *Perfect or Dark* skill levels. Talk about an AI nightmare.

player, who'll take the role of Joanna Dark's yet-to-be named twin sister. The two of you can cover each other, pursue different objectives simultaneously, strategize and experience the complete quest and all its cinemas together. To keep the cooperative mode balanced, Rare added more enemies and gave both players a shared health bar. If one player dies and hits the Start Button to rejoin the mission, he or she will steal life from the second player. All of *Perfect Dark's* 25 story-mode missions can be played either by yourself or cooperatively. "So if you get to level nine and you're stuck," Lobb said, "you can call your friend over and play through it together, and then go back to playing single player if you like."

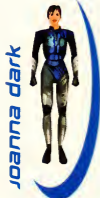
No friends? No problem. *Perfect Dark* also lets you play the single-player missions cooperatively with a buddy computer-controlled "bot"—or "simulant," as Rare calls them. He won't complete objectives or follow your orders, but the buddy simulant will cover your back and help you through trickier areas. You'll get the option to cooperate with up to four simulants in the single-player game as you beat the higher difficulty levels.

Perfect Dark's other Innovation worth waiting for is its revolutionary Counter-operative mode. Like the cooperative game, it lets you play the one-player missions split-screen with a friend—except this time he's not on your side. One person plays Joanna Dark and tries to complete her objectives as usual. The second player jumps into the body of one of the level's bad guys, with little health or ammunition. The trick is for the counter-operative (whom level enemies ignore) to stalk Joanna and pick her off with a head shot, push furniture in front of doors to trap her in a room—anything to prevent her from completing the mission. If the counter-operative dies, he or she is immediately zapped, *The Matrix*-style, into the body of another enemy on the level. Counter-operatives can also swallow a suicide pill and

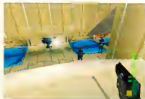
jump to a different baddie if Joanna gets too far away. "Players tend to play counter-op after they learned the levels," Lobb told us, "so they have a good idea where Joanna is. They can do things like turn and face the wall to hide, wait till Joanna fights a group of enemies then run up behind her and score a head shot."

Whether you play the main story mode alone or with a pal, we figure you'll find the missions more gripping than anything offered in past console or PC first-person shooters. Set in dreary 2023, *Perfect Dark* has you guiding Joanna Dark, a gifted rookie agent for the Carrington Institute, as she uncovers a conspiracy between the ominous dataDyne Corporation and a race of scaly aliens called the Skeeदार. We won't give too many plot details away, but over the course of the 17 missions (plus four bonus levels) you'll help the president eject from a doomed Air Force 1; encounter a suave, mysterious enemy named Mr. Blonde; reprogram a hover taxi to crash and create a diversion; dress as a hostage negotiator to infiltrate an enemy-held island villa; and fight alongside a 3-foot-tall grey alien named Elvis. Levels are set everywhere from cramped Area 51 to snowy places that stretch for miles. Some levels also offer multiple exit points; where you leave determines where you'll start in the next level. You'll soon learn that some entry areas are better than others.

The entire story is helped along with more than 45 minutes of cinemas packed with voice and motion-captured animation (*Perfect Dark* is a 32-megabyte cart, the same size as *Ocarina of Time*). And here's a slick little twist—you can actually interrupt cinemas at any point and start the game right where they left off. It's just an extra bill of pizzazz you'll appreciate when, say, a group of guards are looking the other way in a cinema or a character you need to save is about to be offered. Just tap a button and presto—the game jumps from cutscene to real time.



Age: 23
Role: This British babe is so skilled at gunplay and secret-agent stuff that the Carrington Institute issued her the call sign "Perfect Dark." Nevertheless, she's still a rookie spook.





Like GoldenEye, Perfect Dark offers three difficulty levels: Agent, Secret Agent and Perfect Agent. This time, however, each skill level packs more than just extra objectives and tougher enemies. Play the Secret Agent and Perfect Agent difficulties (after beating regular Agent, Lobb suggests), and you'll find new areas in each mission you couldn't access before. Sometimes you'll even start a level in a completely different location and role. Take the villa mission, for instance. At the Agent and Secret Agent difficulties, Joanna starts the stage in a high mountain perch and must snipe several bad guys before they blow away a hostage negotiator. But at the Perfect Agent difficulty, Joanna is actually assigned to go undercover as the negotiator. Each of the three difficulties is nearly a whole different game.

Lobb told us Perfect Dark is a three- to four-times bigger game than GoldenEye. He estimated that skilled gamers can beat the Agent difficulty in about eight to 10 hours. Perfecting Perfect Agent, on the other hand, could take well over a month and is "something you can brag about," Lobb said.

Of course, no matter how good Perfect Dark's story mode may be, it's not the reason people will be playing this game a year from now. "A lot of people bought GoldenEye for the multiplayer," Edmonds said, "so we really wanted to concentrate on making better weapons and better-designed multiplayer levels. And we wanted the simulants." These AI guys are just as important to Perfect Dark as Joanna, Mr. Blonde, Elvis or any of the

game's other stars. They come in 12 varieties (see next page), and you and three friends can play with as many as eight simulants in multiplayer mode. That makes for 12 characters wreaking havoc in one deathmatch arena at the same time (although you run into some frame-rate problems, which we'll get to in a bit).

Perfect Dark's multiplayer options are limitless. You can combine human and Simulant players in any team combination. You get 19 deathmatch levels, including the Complex, Temple and Facility arenas from GoldenEye. "I guarantee after you play for a while you'll realize those three are the worst," Lobb said. "The other 16 are all better."

Rare also scrapped GoldenEye's multiplayer modes and came up with six new scenarios in addition to standard free-for-all and team deathmatching. The first mode, called Hold the Briefcase, plays like GoldenEye's Flag Tag. Players who find and carry the briefcase for 30 seconds win one point. Another mode, Hacker Central, has two objectives: Players must find a data link, then carry it to a computer and stand for 20 seconds to activate the terminal. You get Pop A Cap, a game in which players take turns as the highlighted target whom everyone else must blow away. The King of the Hill mode has everyone scrambling to control a specific area on the map. Touch that Box is a similar game, except players hunt down and tag crates to turn them their team's color. Finally, Perfect Dark offers a proper Capture-the-Flag mode, as well. Of course, Perfect Dark allows so much customization



Continued on page 148

agent jonathan



Age: 28
Role: Also a Carrington Institute agent, Jonathan's skills are second only to Joanna's. His weapon of choice—the Magnum Revolver—comes in handy during his deep-cover missions.



Artificial Life of the Party

Perfect Dark's 12 simulants make for one rowdy crowd

We call them "bots." Rare calls them simulants. But one thing's for sure: Perfect Dark's computer-controlled combatants are the most cunning AI guys we've ever faced—or allied with—on the consoles. As we've said, the game lets you and three friends play with as many as eight simulants at once, in any team configuration you like (Ken Lobb prefers to play with four players, each teaming with a simulant ally, thus making four teams of two).

But here's the wild part: PD's motley crew of sims comes in a multitude of "personalities," 12 in all (see illustrations), from which you can choose in multiplayer's Advanced Setup menu.

And as if that weren't enough variety, you can assign each simulant a difficulty setting that determines his level of deathmatching skill. You get six levels—Meat, Easy, Normal, Hard, Perfect and Dark. "My advice is if you play with sims, play with Normals," Lobb said. "It's like playing against a human. You'll never say, 'Damn! That guy cheated!'" On the other hand, Hard-, Perfect- and Dark-level sims cheat, he told us. They'll rotate faster than you, move quicker and aim better. In fact, Lobb said that, in some scenarios, it's impossible for four human players to beat just one Dark sim.

With 12 sim types to choose from and six

difficulties for each, Perfect Dark delivers more than 70 "bot variations in all. But just because they've got strong personalities doesn't mean they're above taking orders. By holding A and tapping one of the C buttons, you can issue simple commands—such as "follow me" or "kill PacifistSim"—to particular simulants on your team. Or you can hold the R Button to apply the same order to all your AI squadmates. We've heard this feature may not make it into the final version. Regardless, you're going to be working closely with these guys in PD; you'll might as well get to know them now.



Name: **normalsim**

Personality: No special fetishes here. Just like any human player, all NormalSim cares about is shooting enemies and living to see payday.

Name: **Pacifistsim**

Personality: He thinks guns are evil, so he runs around the level and tries to collect all of them, never firing a single shot. Players get stuck waiting for weapons to respawn, unless they take matters into their own hands. "When you kill PacifistSim—boom!—all the weapons come flying out of him," Lobb said. "It's like Christmas."



Name: **vendettasim**

Personality: This guy picks one enemy target at random, then hunts him 'til he's dead.



Name: **cowardsim**

Personality: Sometimes it's better to run and fight another day. But for CowardSim, that sometime is, well, all the time.



Name: **RevengeSim**

Personality: The game's most dangerous simulant, RevengeSim hunts down the last person who gave him grief. "If you kill RevengeSim and you have a 20-minute game," Lobb said, "he's gonna be killing you for the next 19 minutes. Until someone else kills him. Then he's like, 'Oh, you want some of me now?'"





Name: **Predatorsim**

Personality: Schwarzenegger and Denny Glover know all about these guys, who like to stay cloaked and shielded.



Name: **Turtlesim**

Personality: He's not fast, but he's not stupid. TurtleSim likes to hide in corners and fire up his shields.

Name: **Cheetasim**

Personality: Him CheetaSim. Him real fast.



Name: **Fistsim**

Personality: Guns? Who needs 'em. Not FistSim, who prefers hand-to-hand chopsocky.



Name: **Kamikazesim**

Personality: The simulant with a death wish, he'll run at you with guns blazing no matter what weapon you're blasting in his direction.



Name: **Shieldsim**

Personality: As if this sim's love of shields doesn't make him hard enough to kill, he's got extra health, too.

Name: **Rocketsim**

Personality: Rocket launchers are this guy's weapon du'jour.



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a deadly curse, you can bet
it won't be with her good looks.



Sega Dreamcast.

A promotional poster for Tomb Raider: Legend. Lara Croft is shown in profile, running through a dark, ancient stone tunnel. She is wearing her signature black and tan outfit and is holding a gold-colored handgun. The scene is lit with a warm, orange glow from the left, and a green light source is visible behind her, creating a silhouette effect. The background shows rough stone walls and a wooden beam.

Coming soon
to the
Sega Dreamcast.

CORE

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EIDOS
INTERACTIVE

tombraider.com



Age: 62

Role: He's a kindly old scientist who founded the Carrington Institute to distribute gee-whiz technologies to the world at large. He also directs the CI's agents from a computer link in his office.

Continued from page 143

that these modes are only the beginning of what you and three pals can do in the game (see sidebar below).

Nintendo and Rare know many gamers bought GoldenEye just for the multiplayer mode; they've built Perfect Dark so deathmatch-happy gamers can ignore the one-player story if they want. "You can just play multiplayer," Lobb said. "It'll allow you to open all the levels. You can get all the weapons. You can open all the stuff that's involved in multiplayer. You don't have to touch the one-player game."

You earn access to more weapons, levels

and game types by completing Perfect Dark's 30 Challenges, special missions that work like the trials in *Turok: Rage Wars*. So, when you first switch on Perfect Dark, you'll find only a few deathmatch levels, five simulant types, basic weaponry and the standard free-for-all deathmatch. But, "every time you play a new challenge, it's something you haven't seen before," Lobb said. "You beat that challenge, you open its [arena] for multiplayer. You beat a certain type of simulant, you get that simulant. You find certain types of weapons in that challenge, you get those weapons in multiplayer." Better still, you can play these



do-it-yourself deathmatching

think you can build a better game than Rare? give it a shot.

Inventive gamers—the kind who contrived a million-and-one multiplayer scenarios for GoldenEye—will fall to their knees and give thanks to the deathmatch gods for Perfect Dark. This thing gives you complete control over every conceivable multiplayer option. Selecting the Advanced Setup header in the Combat Simulator menu opens an unprecedented number of settings and submenus. Once you choose the arena and game type (Capture the Flag, King of the Hill, etc.), you can visit other menus to enable one-hit kills, disable the radar, turn off auto-aim,

and pick fast- or slow-motion movement.

Advanced Setup also lets you choose which simulant will join your game, their personality types and level of difficulty. Then you can assign all the human and AI players in any team configuration you can think of. Finally, you have complete freedom to place whatever weapons and gadgets you like into the arena (or you can simply choose GoldenEye-style presets like Power Weapons, Grenade Launchers, etc.). The custom-weapon panel consists of six slots. Whatever weapon or gizmo you assign to slot number one will spawn in more locations within the level than anything else. Items assigned to slot number six, on the other hand, will be the hardest to find, spawning only in one location.

If all these menus and options set your head spinning, don't worry. Everything's laid out in a logical order. And here's the best part: you can name and save your custom scenario to a Memory Pak. So, say you spend an hour designing what is surely the most ingenious deathmatch mode of all time, you can slap it on your Pak, stick it in your pocket and haul it to a pal's house, where you

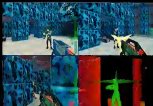
hopefully won't get schooled in the scenario you just devised. Or you could use your DexDrive to post it on the Net (we can't wait to see the Web site subculture that sprouts up around this game).

Every Nintendo tester we talked to proudly boasted of their favorite handmade scenario. And that's what makes the Advances Setup menus so incredible—they force you to experiment, to invent games maybe no one else has thought of. Perfect Dark comes with a few preset scenarios to start you off, and here are five of our own to help get your creative juices pumpin'...

That's my shotgun!

The setup: In the Custom-Weapons Panel, place the shotgun in slot six, so it only appears in one spawn location. Place shields (PD's version of the bullet-proof vest) in slot three, so they spawn more often. Set the win limit to one-kill wins.

The game: In this chaotic scenario, everyone's frantic to find the shotgun, since they only need to kill one person to win. AI





challenges with as many as three people.

Perfect Dark packs the largest arsenal ever seen in a console shooter. You'll eventually find more than 44 weapons and gadgets, and each one has a secondary function you access by holding the B button. Notable boomsticks include the Laptop Gun, which transforms into a sentry turret you can mount on walls. The Dragon machine gun is especially fun, since it becomes a proximity mine in its secondary mode. ("People see the Dragon lying on the ground," Lobb said. "They pick it up and boom! Nothing's more satisfying." And then you have the future-cool gadgets like remote camera probes that let you spy on enemies in other rooms, as well as night-vision goggles you can use to stalk enemies after you switch off the lights.

As you'd expect, most weapons produce spectacular effects. In fact, all of Perfect Dark's visuals are a step above GoldenEye's. Still, the version we played suffered sluggish frame-rates in the co-op and multiplayer modes. Nintendo assured us that Rare is smoothing out the sluggish gameplay, and the final version will be more than playable. "Basically, if you pick a level and go with four

players and two simulants, the frame-rate's fine," Lobb said. "Four players with four simulants is probably OK in 14 of the 19 levels. Some of the levels actually work OK with four players and eight computer guys."

You don't need the Expansion Pak to play Perfect Dark, but you'll want it. Without the Pak, you can't have more than two players in any of the multiplayer modes. The Pak also lets you play in hi-res, although "hi-res is really good for two-player multiplayer," Lobb said. "Above that I would advise you turn hi-res off or the frame-rate suffers."

Tiny problems like this aside, Perfect Dark really is a game that's been lovingly crafted until the developers were finished—unlike so many other titles that seem rushed and fall short of their potential. We haven't even covered all of PD's features, stuff like the firing range that lets you practice every weapon in the game or the myriad hard-to-find secrets (score five head shots in a row on one level, for example, and you'll earn a special weapon). Fear not, however. The game's nearly here. Get in line April 30 and you'll finally experience first-person perfection for yourself. 🚗

cassandra de vries



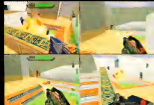
Age: 39
Role: Dan Carrington's archnemesis. Cassandra serves as head of the shadowy dataDyne Corporation, where she connives unscrupulous plans to topple her competition. In other words, she's one power-hungry bitch.

the same time, anyone on the wrong side of the shotgun is scrambling for armor and trying to steal the weapon away with his/her Disarm Attack (the punch's secondary function). Incidentally, Nintendo product evaluator Armond Williams Jr. gave us this idea, and it may wind up as a preset scenario in the game.

save the president

The setup: Select one CowardSim, give him the body of the president who appears in the one-player game and put him on your team of four human players. Then choose three or four KamikazeSims and make them the opposing team.

The game: In this variation of a classic



GoldenEye custom scenario, the Coward simulant on your team serves as the president, whom all the human players must protect from the marauding KamikazeSims. Play for time instead of kill limits; try to keep the prez alive for the entire game. It won't be easy, since the easily spooked CowardSim runs from every threat. All human players will need to keep pace with the president and act as human shields while shooting back at the Kamikazes. Disable radar to make things extra exciting.

farsighted

The setup: Stick the FarSight XR-20 in slot number one, so it spawns nearly everywhere, then choose a large level filled with small rooms. Build a team of three simulants to battle your group of human players. Throw whatever other guns you like into the vacant weapon slots.

The game: As soon as the game starts, all the human players need to grab FarSights and meet up in one of the level's rooms (you should all agree on a meeting room before you kick off the scenario). Then, standing back-to-back, everyone needs to pick off the simulant enemies from afar, with the FarSight, before the sims find your team's room and slaughter the lot of you with their close-range weapons.

see no evil

The setup: Slap cloaking devices into slot number one and IR goggles into slot six. Put whatever other weapons you like in the remaining slots. You can play this free-for-all mode against any combination of human and sim opponents.

The game: Combatants will find cloaking devices everywhere, so they'll probably spend most of the game invisible. Whoever finds the rare IR goggles—which let you see cloaked enemies—will have a definite edge.

suicide squad

The setup: Pit you and three friends against one or more NormalSims set at the Perfect or Dark difficulties.

The game: This is a game of survival. Simulants set at Perfect level or higher can score a headshot on you faster than you can slide your finger up to the R Button. "You'll need to strategize as a team to beat one or two of these guys," Ken Lobb said, "and it makes for a whole different game." His advice: Band together in an easily defendable room and set up Laptop sentry guns—lots of them—to mount a defense. And don't forget to pull the laptops off the wall to reload 'em when they run dry.

Limits.



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2	Music Clip	Sony • www.sony.com/musicclip	\$300	64MB • n/a
3	Rush	Philips • www.philipsusa.com	\$200	32MB • n/a
4	Wrist Audio Player	Casio • www.casio.com	\$300	32MB • n/a
5	Diamond Rio 500	Diamond • www.rioport.com	\$300	64MB • 96MB
6	Nomad II	Creative • www.nomadworld.com	\$400	64MB • Any flash card size
7	Personal Jukebox	HanGo • www.pjbox.com	\$740	8.46GB • n/a (stores 120 CDs)
8	Memory Stick Walkman	Sony • www.sel.sony.com	\$400	64MB • 120MB

Note: 64MB holds about one hour of CD-quality audio. Most players come with MP3 software.



5 Diamond Rio 500

7

Personal jukebox



8 Memory Stick Walkman

Why Not Use MD for MP3?

When it comes to portable digital music, the cost of media is a major concern. As it stands, most MP3 players use rather costly flash memory. Imagine this scenario: You want to make some "mix tapes" of, say, 100 of your favorite MP3 files. To do this, you'd need around six 64MB smartmedia cards. The cost? Well over \$500. This is unacceptable, as the player itself already costs around \$500.

But fret not. There's another, more cost-effective way! The Voquette system coupled with a Sharp MD player/recorder. Instead of flash memory, this setup uses standard Minidiscs.

So you can buy six blank minidiscs—a total of \$20 or so—to record your party mixes on, via the Voquette-compatible Sharp Minidisc player/recorder. The downside to the Voquette option is you don't have the luxury of simply copying files

from your computer to your player (like you can with an MP3 player). Instead, you must create a track list of digital audio with the included software, and then hit the record button on-screen. The software then communicates with the Sharp MD, and 70 minutes later your little minidisc is full of your favorite songs (separated into tracks and everything). You can even have it record in the middle of the night, so you technically don't have to sit there and wait for it to finish. The **Sharp Internet Minidisc Bundle** is pictured above (around \$200). The Voquette cable and robust software is \$70 by itself. Check out:

www.sharp-usa.com and www.voquette.com for more info.



MD-MP3 Internet Bundle



6 Nomad II

Media Type	Battery Life/ Recharge Type	Interface	Comments
CD-R discs	8 hours 4 AAs	n/a	If you already own a CD burner this is a good option. Sure, it has moving parts and could skip, but the media is cheap—blank CDs are less than \$1/ea.
Built-in	5 hours 1 AA	USB	James Bond like pen stylings—although a laser beam would've been a nice option. Seriously, it's a nice little VAIO MP3 player. Sony design rocks!
SmartMedia	12 hours 2 AAs	Parallel	Certainly a nice-looking player, but it may be best to wait for the 64MB version (May release), as 32MB just isn't enough size. Also, why no USB interface?
Built-in	4 hours Rechr. lith. ion	USB	Well, it's a regular watch on top of everything else. There's just something cool about having a portable MP3 player watch. Although, it's quite big.
SmartMedia	13 hours 1 AA	USB	The Rio is the all-around best player. It lacks certain features (built-in mic, an FM tuner, etc.) but it plays digital audio like a champ. Nice jog dial, too.
SmartMedia	8-10 hours 1 AA/NIMH	USB	The built-in FM tuner and mic for voice recording are excellent features. It's a bit more expensive than others, but it has the features to justify the price.
Built-in	30 hours Rechr. lith. ion	USB	This is the top-of-the-line player if you can afford it. It beats out all of the others in storage hands down. Impressive technology indeed—for a price.
Memory Stick	5 hours Rechr. lith. ion	USB	Like the Rio and Nomad II, the Memory Stick Walkman is an all-around good player. Plus, it uses Sony's up-and-coming Memory Stick format a little pricey though.



BETRAYAL



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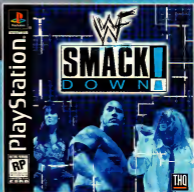
Make friends then break them as you roam backstage from the boiler room to the kitchen.

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You know, I wonder what Yost and Shane McMahon are talking about.

Backstage Politics



Review Crew

Crispin Boyer

Crispin's not really sure why Shawn had such a beef with the George Foreman Grill (see Shawn's bio for the full story). He reckons some people just fear what they don't understand. In other news, the George Foreman Grill is the greatest mall-order product since that Heavy Metal Memories CD.

Current Favorites

Front Mission 3, Chu Chu Rocket, Hot Shots Golf 2

Favorite Genres

Action, Adventure



Dan Hsu "Shoe"

This month, Shoe's busy promoting Chu Chu Rocket and Fear Effect around town. It's almost enough just trying to keep him from spoiling plot to EE. He's also like to use this space to give a big Superfriends "Whassup!" shout out to his gal e-friends Mary, Rachel and Elizabeth.

Current Favorites

Soul Calibur, Fear Effect, XI Jumbo, Chu Chu Rocket

Favorite Genres

Puzzle, Strategy, Action



John Davison

The office has gone crazy for The Sims on the PC. Between this and the wonderful Fear Effect, Johnny England has been somewhat distracted...so much so he's had to employ a maid to clean his apartment. Laziness reigns supreme in our Editor in Chief's world.

Current Favorites

Fear Effect, The Sims (PC), Chu Chu Rocket, Crazy Taxi

Favorite Genres

Racing, Action



Che Chou

Che is bristling with excitement as he prepares for his vacation in Taiwan. Just think...the food, the night markets, the scooters, the pornographic VCDs...it's just too bad he can't take Vib-Ribbon on the plane with him over the Pacific. Oh, song 3 on Fantasma by Cornelius is the hardest Vib-Ribbon level EVER. Try it!

Current Favorites

FM3, Vib-Rib, DoA2, RECV

Favorite Genres

Fighting, Racing, RPG



Chris Johnston

At the end of deadline Chris could be seen running up and down the halls yelling (in Southern Gentlemanly tone) "Where's my pascage!" Of course, all he got in return were yelps of "WHAAZZZAAAARR!" As soon as deadline's over it's back to marathon sessions of Vib-Ribbon. Aww yeah.

Current Favorites

Vib-Ribbon, Gals Fighters, Chu Chu Rocket

Favorite Genres

Adventure, Puzzle

Shiny New Review Crew Member

(still coming soon!)

Who Will It Be? Our search for the last RC member is nearly over. But who will it be? The "real" Elephant Sak? The return of Sushi-X? Find out soon. Really. We promise. We're not kidding this time. You'll see.



Dean Hager

Viewing a quick-time movie of Square's new baseball game for the PS2 has given Dean the shakes. He says he's never seen such a beautiful sight. Needless to say, he's all but forgotten the N64 and only dreams of the incredible sports games to come for the PS2.

Current Favorites

Hot Shots Golf 2, Gran Turismo 2, NASCAR Rumble

Favorite Genres

Sports, Racing



Shawn Smith

Having been defeated by Crispin Boyer's multi-national pro-giri campaign, Shawn has taken his anti-whatever movement elsewhere. Specifically, Florida—where he plans to start an anti-old coalition against old people. Shawn feels confident the locals will stand behind him.

Current Favorites

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, Fear Effect, Ghosts 'N Goblins

Favorite Genres

Action, Adventure

Team EGM

After months of reviewing a ridiculous amount of sports titles, things have slowed down for Team EGM. Beyond Tee Off Golf, Virtua Striker 2 and the long-awaited NHL 2K, there's been little for the guys to do. Thankfully NHL 2K has saved the month from being a total loss. Those other two games...well, read the reviews. On a more positive note, check out page 96 to see what has the guys going nuts. A first peek at Square's baseball sim for the PlayStation 2. 📺



Dan Leahy

Current Favorites

NHL 2K, Madden 2000, NBA 2K, Dead or Alive 2

Can it be? No more waxing nostalgia over hockey games of the Genesis era? Leahy hasn't decided yet, but he does think NHL 2K is very good. In other news, he is bragging to office pals that he's beaten his Soul Calibur addiction. It's back to Sports Guy! Oh, and maybe a little Dead or Alive 2.



John Ricciardi

Current Favorites

Cade, Veronica, NHL 2K, Vagant Story, Blonic Commando

Ricciardi's been in somewhat of a slump ever since his girlfriend went back to Japan to finish school. In fact, if he didn't get the Japanese Code: Veronica in the mail the very same day she left, he might have taken off after her! We're willing to bet he ends up in Japan before year's end...



Todd Zuniga

Current Favorites

NHL 2K, NBA 2K, March Madness 2000, Fear Effect, WWF SmackDown!

Because of NHL 2K Todd used his entire savings account to buy a caltheter and an IV so he won't have to leave his chair. He's so enamored of the final version of the game he's been talking about trying out for an NHL team. Very strange.

This Month...

Bad timing. That's what the Crew was up against this month. You might have noticed that our promised review of *Dead Or Alive 2* is conspicuously missing. Tecmo pushed their final release back a couple weeks and missed our submission deadline. Sure, we could have gone ahead and reviewed our beta GD-ROM, but there were just too many omitted modes (versus, practice and options) for us to honestly review the game. And we know for a fact that other magazines are reviewing the beta in order to beat the game out to the shelves. We figure, in the long run, you will all understand, and appreciate our belated—but legitimate—review next month, in the meantime: CHU CHU ROCKET!

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards



Platinum Awards go to games that get four 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.



Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.



Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards**.



Publisher: Jaleco
Developer: Jaleco
Featured In: EGM #240
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Nice clean graphics
Worst Feature: Slowdown and sluggish controls
Web Site: www.jaleco.com

Jaleco's dare it. *Carrier* has beat out *Code Veronica* to the market, but having played both games extensively, I can only say it's not quite as polished as *Veronica*. Even so, *Carrier* is a solid 3D adventure in much the same vein. Story and character play a central role in *Carrier*; Jaleco does a great job with the story in the first third of the game, but somewhere after that, *Carrier* seems to collapse under the weight of its own contrivances. What it basically comes down to is, how much can one game borrow from another? Anyone who's ever played *Resident Evil* will quickly spot the casual placement of journals, keycards, precious life potions, a healthy preoccupation with firearms, munitions, and other survival horror necessities. There's even a pseudo-zapping system when you play as Jessica, the female counterpart to the protagonist. It's all there, but it's missing that special something—call it "souf." If you will—that makes you really cherish the experience. Still, *Carrier* sports some of the most detailed graphics and environments on the Dreamcast yet. Kudos to Jaleco for some genuine ambience. There's occasional slowdown, even when absolutely nothing is happening on screen, with only two survival horror games on the DC so far. **Carrier is a great entry-level adventure for fans of the genre.**

What kind of name is Jessica, anyway? This is definitely **more B-movie than Resident Evil** will ever be. Some eye-candy graphically, but it's all very plastic. It doesn't have that dingy, chaotic look that a survival horror game needs to provoke fear. The game has a tendency to shift camera angles way too often in rooms, leading to a few problems if you're backing away from enemies. A decent prelude to *Code Veronica*, but otherwise it's average.

It's like *Resident Evil*, only without any of the good bits, and it's set on a ship. Playing this makes me feel that we're being a bit harsh on *Blue Stinger*, because that's eminently more playable than this. As David St. Hubbins once said, "there's a fine line between clever and stupid" and *Carrier* is on the wrong side of that line. The character design is bad (the zombies are laughable), the acting is pathetic and the story is weak. **Wait for Code Veronica.**

Carrier certainly sounds exciting on paper: DC graphics, survival horror on an aircraft carrier, etc. But when you put in some game time, you may find yourself quite bored at times. This game isn't bad at all, but it's not terribly exciting either. It borrows a little too much from certain other survival horrors, making me feel like "I've played this game before." Get *Carrier* to tide you over until *Code Veronica* arrives. **Just don't get your hopes up too high.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	10	5



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sonic Team
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack, Internet Play
Best Feature: This is one kick-ass party game
Worst Feature: Internet play net perfect
Web Site: www.sega.com

I know you're going to pass this one up in the store. I know you're thinking, "Chu Chu What?" I know you're looking at the screenshot and dismissing it as kid's stuff. But please, do me a favor and play the game. Rent it. Borrow it. Buy it with the intention of returning it. I don't care. Just get it, along with three more controllers (with hands attached to them) and experience one of the coolest multiplayer party games you'll ever see on this system. Sonic Team has created something great—**Chu Chu Rocket is brilliant in its simplicity.** Within a minute, any game (casual or hardcore) can jump right into the action and have fun. You'll have plenty of laughs as you work to capture mice, intercept opponents' trails and guide cats into safety rockets. The game even supports team play, 2P co-op, puzzle modes and Internet competition. Although playing over the Net is an exciting proposition, the lag/lag you get makes it impossible to make instant moves (which are vital). The lack of options (no stage select, no changing of game settings) with network play is also disappointing. BUT...it's still more than playable, and since everyone has the same lag handicap, it's really not a very big deal. Even as a one-player game, *Chu Chu Rocket*, with plenty of puzzle stages (well over 100) to clear. Get it...now, damn!

Like most great puzzle games, *Chu Chu Rocket* is simple to look at, easy to learn and more addictive than chocolate-chip crack. Play this game with three friends and it becomes **pure, ingenious chaos.** *Chu Chu* also—despite minor lag—makes a great show-piece title for online play on the Dreamcast Network. Any of the multiplayer modes aren't enough, you get a ton of puzzle modes, co-op games and options. This thing'll never get old.

Chu Chu Rocket is as charming as it is addictive. In fact, the game is sort of genius in its purity and minimalism. Like all great puzzle games, your mind is constantly playing catch-up to what's happening on the screen. This is especially true in four-player versus mode where everybody's out to screw each other. I was skeptical about Internet play, until I tried it with *Shoe* and *Crispin* online. OK, there's a little lag, but it's quite playable. Suggest!

Sonic Team just doesn't quit delivering quality games. This is one of those games you can get into right away, it's kind of like Lemmings, but from a top-down perspective. While the one-player game is fun in its own right (and will no doubt take players hours to master), **what really makes this game shine are the multiplayer modes.** This is also one of the very first online games for the Dreamcast, and is a blast to play online even though there's a lag fix.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	10	5



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom/Iskumi
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-2
Supports: Jump Pack, Arcade Stick
Best Feature: It's a 2D shooter!
Worst Feature: You'll go mad from sprite overload
Web Site: www.capcom.com



Thank you Capcom. The traditional 2D shooter is perhaps my favorite subgenre of games, and it's really nice to see some trickle out here and there. Giga Wing certainly won't be remembered as one of the all-time greats—it certainly won't share the pedestal with classics like Radiant Silvergun (Saturn/Japan), Ten Cobra or the old R-types. Still, it's a fun game. And since you won't be seeing many more of this style of shooter (vertical scrolling, completely 2D anymore, you know as well as I do), while you can, if you've seen any of our previews, then you know that **Giga Wing is one massive sprite-orgy.** You won't believe the stuff that'll fill up the screen until you see it. Explosions, projectiles, power-ups, medals, enemies...they'll wall-to-wall carpet the playing area, with little or no slowdown at all. It's very impressive to see, especially if you understand how much memory all these 2D sprites are taking up. The gameplay is pretty straightforward, with the only noteworthy feature being your ship's reflective power (which is handy and gimmicky at the same time). Unfortunately, due to the fact that this is an arcade game with unlimited continues (and you get most of your power-ups back after you die), you fan with this disc may be short-lived. You can beat the game several times in an hour!

Shoe

I was weaned on vertical arcade shooters like Ten Cobra, Truston (and fell hard for Radiant Silvergun on the Saturn), so I have a soft spot for Giga Wing. But unlike those shooters of yore, Giga Wing is pulpy of being a tad too inconsiderate to the player. In other words, **this game is a "powerer-muncher."** I do like the reflective shield that lines back, and the touchy 2D graphics, but Giga Wing was designed to crush you. Save your eggs now.

Che

Having been raised on top-down shooters like Raiden, I was very eager to play Giga Wing. There's so much going on on screen that this **makes Raiden look like a cakewalk.** Unfortunately since you have unlimited continues, it'll be easy for anyone to walk through this game. They should've at least made it so that you had to finish on limited continues the first time through. Great game, but needs the hints to keep people hooked at home.

Chris

This is the most chaotic and intense 2D shooter I've ever played. The screen is literally filled with enemy fire at all times. **Consider yourself a God if you can complete the higher levels without using continue about ten times.** Giga Wing will overwhelm you with a barrage of bullets and explosions, but lacks substance to hook you for the long haul. Like a sugar rush, it never lasts. Rent it for a night to experience its decent two-player mode.

Dean

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
7 6 5 4



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: EGM #126
Players: 1-3
Supports: Arcade Stick
Best Feature: Fast load times, animations intact
Worst Feature: No internet mode
Web Site: www.capcom.com



SFAs on the DC has been long overdue. It looks like we'll never get to experience the Dream Passport modes that were in the Japanese SFAs, because Capcom has decided to remove Internet support for the U.S. release. However, **Capcom's late release has suddenly renewed our love for SFAs.** Know this: The DC version has perfect animation, super quick-load times, and all the modes from the PS version (World tour, dramatic battle and dramatic versus). One and Shoe actually stopped playing Chu Chu Rocket and started going at it like it was 1999.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
8 9 8 7



Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega PC
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-4
Supports: Internet Play (e-mail)
Best Feature: It's so simple and it's free!
Worst Feature: The "just one more game" syndrome
Web Site: www.sega.com



Once in a while, a puzzle game will hit our offices so hard, it'll affect productivity for days. **When we got our hands on Swirl, we couldn't stop playing it.** Swirl was hit the worst (which makes sense, since he loves puzzle games!). The art guys (Andrew, Jim) took a liking to the game as well, though they were probably drawn to all the bright and pretty colors. This game is tremendously simple and addictive...combine that with its "free" factor (see issue #127 for details), and you have yourself an instant success. We did have troubles with the e-mail feature though.

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
8 9 8 7



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim
Featured In: EGM #126
Players: 1-4
Supports: VMU, Jump Pack
Best Feature: Graphics are just OK
Worst Feature: Useless camera angles
Web Site: www.acclaim.com



Despite the anime character designs, the familiar look and other loose similarities—Hot Shots Golf (this ain't, I wouldn't even place it in the same category...and believe me, I've played enough HS and HS 2 lately to know. At best Tee Off is a slightly amusing if not downright forgettable golf game. **Heading the list of lackluster features is a trio of illogical camera angles** which do absolutely nothing for functionality. Most annoying are the pre-shot overview and after-shot ball cams. Oddly they're aimed in the wrong direction, which is toward the golfer rather than down the fairway. They're not rotate either so essentially you're stuck with two or three angles rather than an infinite amount should they float freely. For a game that strives to copy the best you'd think they could steal the view options as well! Another thing the y should've pilfered from Hot Shots is the sound. The generic Japanese hair-metal, coupled with the occasional yodel from the gelfins, had me clambering to turn down the volume—it's that bad. In the end, Tee Off just fails flat to generate any excitement. The courses are overly flat and void of interesting dynamics, the ball hits and runs in a predictable way and there's a general lack of control on all fronts. Sorry Dreamcasters, you'll have to wait a little longer for a great golf game!

Dean

Those looking to recreate the fun of Mario Golf or Hot Shots Golf will be disappointed by Tee Off. **The game moves at a snail's pace, and the camera views are nauseating.** For example, you hit a shot and the camera immediately pans right up on the ball as it sails through the air. This eliminates your chance to see how much the wind curves it, if you really shot it or hooked it, etc. Even for a golf freak like me, this game doesn't cut it.

Dan I.

Ever play one of those ho-hum games that's just SO average in every aspect, it nearly puts you to sleep? Welcome to Tee Off. As a golf game, **Tee Off does nothing to advance the genre.** The graphics are crappy (sure, they're 4x-re, but it's just hi-res blah), the gameplay is bland, the physics are weird, and the presentation is clumsy. For now, it may be the "best" golf game on the DC, but it pales in comparison to games like Mario Golf or Hot Shots 2.

John R.

Strange how Tee Off Golf isn't as fun as Hot Shots on the PlayStation, when Tee Off is so damned similar to it. Sure, Tee Off's still fun and all, but it lacks the style Hot Shots has (thus making it the lesser of the two when it's all said and done). In addition, there are a lot of weird camera angles, and courses just aren't interesting enough. But if you're in dire need of a golf game, **Tee Off Golf will suffice until something better comes along.** Consider renting it first.

Shawn

VISUALS SOUND INGENUITY REPLAY
6 5 5 3



Famine...

Revolt...

Plague...

Rebellion...

The struggle continues...



War-torn China awaits your unification.

Romance VI of The Three Kingdoms

Awakening of the Dragon



- New & improved battle units including Northern Riders & the naval units of Wu
- Redesigned Battle system & new Plot system for more tactical latitude
- New duel-based strategies for more control of the action
- Over 500 characters and 100 historical event sequences
- New personal goals/ambition parameter & defensive traps
- New Chronological Records system comparing player progress to historical events
- 7 new short scenarios & 7 full-length campaigns
- 1 - 8 Player excitement



www.koeigames.com





There's nothing like vintage uniforms to get the nostalgia running through your veins. Even defunct teams (like the Quebec Nordiques and Winnipeg Jets) have available uniforms for gameplay.



For a long, depressing time hockey fans have been waiting impatiently for a game to capture the feel of the NHL, the way hockey vid-games of the mid-'90s did. Well that day has finally come. **NHL 2K is simply**

the best hockey game I've ever played. The gameplay is awesomely smooth and the skating is as realistic as it gets. Checking is fantastic, and the animations that go along with it are graphic and brutal. Skaters can be completely dumped, crunched into a pile, or they can shake off the hit, go to a knee, and pick up where they left off with the puck still on their stick. Checking also offers a great amount of risk/reward, which seems to be lacking in most hockey games. If you miss a big hit you risk giving up a breakaway, but if you lay the skater out you're rewarded with a glimpse of your transition game. There are some flaws, though. When's the fake shot? And the line changing menus are bulky and distracting, though you're able to change offensive and defensive lines separately, which I'm a huge fan of. Also, the goalies seem nearly invincible, which allows a lax defense. It'd be nice if there were more goals off ice skaways to counteract sloppy defensive play. Overall, the game is brilliant. It's a visual exemplar of hockey in the new millennium and the stars of each team shine bright. This is a must-buy. **Todd**

NHL 2K is a game I love to hate. Like the other 2K titles to date, NHL 2K falls into the "just short" category. Maybe I'm expecting too much, but little things, like not tracking League Leaders, goalies made of stone, and the lack of a fake shot, add up to a fair level of frustration for me. **Still, there is enough depth, and definitely enough challenge, to keep me coming back.** Kudos to Black Box for adding to the solid DC sports lineup. **Dan L**

I had my doubts about NHL 2K, boy was I wrong, it's fantastic. The graphics are brilliant. The players are detailed to the hilt, especially in the faces. The ice is like a sheet of glass reflecting everything that rolls across it. **But really, the best part is the gameplay.** It's not a big hockey fan but NHL 2K really got me pumped up. The animation isn't jumpy in the least, it's smooth as silk, even while using special moves. It has a few glitches but overall I like it a lot. **Dean**

What a turnaround! A month ago, we got a preview build of this game that made us shutter, but boy have things changed. **NHL 2K is hardly perfect, but for a first-gen effort it's extremely solid.** The graphics aren't quite up to par with NHL 2000 for the PS2, but they're still real nice, and everything moves at a brisk speed. The gameplay is tight, though sometimes it seems as if the CPU "cheats" a bit. Another must-buy DC sports game? Yes. **John R**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	4	4

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Black Box
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-4
Supports: Jump Pack
Best Feature: Realistic skating
Word Feature: Goalies may be too good
Web Site: www.sega.com



All right, so you can see the writing on the side of the puck if you look closely. Fine, there are nine different types of gloves, four types of sticks, eight types of skates, four types of helmets, all complemented by a bundle of jerseys for each team, some going as far back as 1923. Sure, there are 100 goalie animations, 36,000 unique sound files and 800 different player faces. But amidst all the numbers and statistics to clog your cranium, the best part is that Black Box has done the unthinkable: They've created a stunning hockey game. And we're not just talking about the way it looks. NHL 2K will satiate the appetites of hockey fans who have been making up excuses as to why console hockey games have sucked for the last few years. There are some definite flaws which can be attributed to NHL 2K being a first-generation game. But the major frustration for us is that the mistakes



No hockey game comes close to the sharp graphics of NHL 2K. Player models boast over 1,500 polygons per model.

seem like no-brainers after all this time. First of all, there's no fake shot, which is pretty disappointing. Also, the goalies don't bother to leave the net on a delayed penalty. Come on, guys. The stat tracking is a little weird. There's a ton of stats that can be viewed by each team individually, but there's no league leader page. Odd. And the laughter is that cover boy Brendan Shanahan is wrong-handed! But besides all these tiny complaints, we've got one heck of a game on our hands. The ice is like a mirror, the players skate like real NHLers, checking is as forceful and aggressive as the real thing (you can even lay out players on your own team), and the great players really carry their teams. Great skaters can make great moves, and using an overpursuing defenseman's momentum against him is as satisfying as finding a 20 dollar bill on the street. There are improvements to be made (we've yet to mention the lack of a franchise mode), but overall this game is the best hockey simulation yet, and it's soooo fun.



FORCED FEEDBACK

SOMETHING SPECIAL FOR LOYAL SUBSCRIBERS ONLY! EGM 129

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WANT TO WIN?

We're Giving You Stuff for Free

Take a look at what we're passing on to you this month.

- A signed copy of EGM #129
- A Dreamcast Light Gun from InterAct
- A Turak diorama set
- A black polar fleece vest from Acclaim
- The anime Blue Submarine no. 6 from Bandai
- A PlayStation wallet/organizer from Sany
- A Mega-Memory Card from InterAct
- A WWF Smockdown hat
- A Pen Pen Tricelorn shirt
- A tank-top
- And more than you need

As you may or may not know, we get a lot of cool items from game companies. And yes, we do appreciate them, but all too often after looking at them for a while they end up sitting in somebody's cubicle or getting stored in a cabinet. So we thought, "let's pass some of these things on to our readers, instead of just having them lay around." After all, better you enjoy the stuff than us. Like last month, read the instructions below, send in a postcard and you might just be picked as the winner! This doesn't cost you anything—it's as simple as sending in a postcard with your name, address and phone number on it to the address below. We'll then pick one winner in a few weeks, and send out the goods.

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Congrats to EGM #127 Winner
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All of this and more can be yours by simply sending in a little card with your name, address and telephone number on it. See above and below for further details.

LEGAL STUFF

What Sweepstakes

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Stud Profile: Mahir



Real Name: Mahir

Alias: The Turkish Stud

Occupation: European Stud, Trainer

Hobbies: Playing all of my musical instruments, hanging out with my friends at Bobler's Cafe, swimming, basketball, tennis, volleyball, walking, ping-pong, Inviting and video games courses.

Favorite Video Games of all time: Giant Leon, Metal Gear Solid, Pokémon and the upcoming Martial Kombat sequel starring myself.

Favorite Phrase: "I KISS YOU!!!!!!!"

Why I'm here: Many months ago my Web site on the Internet received much praise and hitings. Having a love for video games, and such a large following, I finally felt I was ready to contact my favorite American video game magazine EGM for a fun time. I finally had the courage! I e-mailed them everyday until someone responded (thank you, Che Chou) and the rest is, as they say, historical.

Favorite Countries: Turkey (of course), Germany, Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Macedonia, Iran and Oak Brook.

Favorite sex: All

Things to Think About: How many children are starving all through the world? How many children are being sold, or made to work and fight? How many people in the world die of cold and hunger? How many people are imprisoned or violated because of the way they think or dress? How many animals are being killed by the people, or how many are in the danger of extinction? How the environment is ruined? Did you, the human beings, create the world and nature? Or did you find it prepared for you? What time is it?

Web Site: members.xoom.com/~XJOM/primal/mahir/index.html

WEB SITES

SPECIAL EDITION

members.tripod.com/~HatPerson/weirdweb.html

Thank you to all who continue to send us sites. We love checking them out more than we love cheese. As usual, here's all kinds of sites: Weird, gaming-related, zany, funny, cool, stupid and so on and so forth. Send Web site submissions to shawn_smith@zd.com

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EGM's Random Quote of the Month

"I think he's going to need a colostomy bag."

- Michael Stessus, Creative Director, in reference to a guy who was shot in a particularly sensitive area in the graphic PC game Soldier of Fortune

DID YOU KNOW...

eBay is a great place to buy hard-to-find games and systems. Just be careful who you buy from. It's also a good place to sell stuff.

EGM threw a little party in San Francisco honoring the winners of our annual Editors' Choice awards. A lot of people were there, and lots of drinking and eating took place. Fun was had by all...especially Shoe!

Some fighters often ask you to kindly dance to the beat of their soul.

Companies should make sure games are 100% finished before releasing them to the public. Although a toll-free hotline sure makes things nice. ;)

eSak is a great wrestler, and does not own, operate nor work for eBay.

GameShortz are fun and educational.

HOT & NOT

@ EGM

The EGM Hot & Not list—a place where you can get an inside look at what the staff of EGM likes and dislikes. The list contains general and specific items, concepts, games, people and more. Note: Particular entries may or may not coincide with the opinions of particular staffers.

- Resident Evil: Code Veronica
- Space Channel 5
- Hybrid electric/gas cars
- Cash money
- Former President Herbert Hoover (w/ blue smoke action)
- Nightmare Creatures 2
- eBay
- The collectible figures from the company 21st Century Toys
- The phrase "You don't like it?"
- Go-Go drinks, especially the Buzzkill flavor
- 40 Winks
- The History Channel
- Harry Potter mania
- Game Blast 2000
- The Bukkake Boys
- The documentary Pimps Up, Hos Down
- Really cold weather
- Ultima Ascension
- Bukkake!
- Month-old milk
- G.I. Joe
- Acclaim's decline
- Courtney Love
- Re-Militarization of Japan
- Politics
- The possibility of Shenmue not coming to the States
- Lt. Col. Teddy Roosevelt
- The cost of flash memory for devices such as MP3 players and digital cameras
- Fear Effect being too short
- Batteries
- Companies who fail to make games that fully utilize a system's capabilities



Virtua Striker 2

Publisher: Sega
Developer: Sega
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Gorgeous visuals
Worst Feature: Atrocious controls
Web Site: www.sega.com



Hmm, what's the best way to say this? Erm, I know, "this game sucks." Quite what planet the development team were on when working on it is beyond me, but it certainly wasn't planets "playable soccer game." The graphics may be lovely, but it suffers dramatically from its arcade heritage. Most apparent is the ludicrous control system it employs. Whereas most soccer games let you move each player around freely, VS2 employs a weird "tap the controls and watch what happens" system that makes you feel like you're not in charge of what your team is actually doing. It's horribly frustrating—and if you're used to the delights of PlayStation soccer (like FIFA 2000, you'll soon feel a rage building up inside as you watch your stupid, stoned, slumped player f' things up every time. Player AI hardly compensates for bad controls either. For the most part the players act particularly dumb, and these seem to be no due consideration for the rankings of the international teams that are represented. Time and time again I watched my boys on the England team make stupid mistakes—like making a throw in that bounces off a player forcing a corner kick. Duh-uh! Heh! The commentary sucks too. Since when did an announcer signify the end of a game with the words "game, set?" What is this, tennis?

John

Some sports are sparsely represented on video game consoles—soccer is NOT one of them. Virtua Striker 2 is a pretty true port of the wildly popular (in Japan, anyway) arcade game, but I don't see the appeal. It has average visuals, frustrating controls and some really annoying sounds. If I'm going to play "arcade"-style sports games, I want them to be over-the-top (a la *Bilz*, *Showtime*, etc.). This just seems watered down and dull.

Dan L

Apparently VS2 is a huge hit in Japanese arcades. What do they see in it? It looks great and moves fast but the gameplay is too limited to give it any lasting appeal. There's no assist support, four-player capability, or the ability to switch players manually. Oh yeah, there's only one camera angle. These flaws alone are enough to turn me away. I realize it's meant to be an arcade game but still, a little more control and depth would go a long way here.

Dean

Virtua Striker 2 has as much depth as a puddle. If you're desperately wanting a soccer game for the DC, then wait, because this isn't it. There's only one camera view, which isn't so bad since you don't have to bother anticipating your opponent's next move since, frustratingly, the player's switch automatically. Why no analog control? And if you're going to go with motor sports, you need some kind of player licensing, which VS2 painfully lacks.

Todd

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	4	3	3



Hydro Thunder

Publisher: Midway
Developer: Eurocom
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Rumble Pak, Controller Pak, Exp. Pak
Best Feature: Near arcade-perfect gameplay
Worst Feature: Some slowdown, weak two-player
Web Site: www.midway.com



How'd they get *Hydro Thunder* to look this good on the N64? Somehow they did. While the graphics aren't as pretty as the arcade or DC versions, gameplay is spot-on (the little touches the DC version lacked are in this). Two-player still has some slowdown and a lot more of the effects are gone (waves, your ship's wake, voice, etc., for the sake of keeping the game running at an even pace). It's too bad that there's nothing above and beyond the arcade game and two extra tracks. No ship customization (like new paint jobs, etc.) or tournament options.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	5



Tarzan

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Eurocom/Disney Int.
Featured In: EGM #126
Players: 1
Supports: Memory Pak, Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Rich-looking visuals
Worst Feature: Kiddie gameplay
Web Site: www.activision.com



If you've played the PS of *Tarzan*, you'll miss nothing by passing up this version on store shelves. If you haven't played *Tarzan* though, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the game's detailed and colorfully rich graphics. The main problem is its lack of difficulty—most gamers will blow through this thing in a night with little or no challenge. So, like a lot of things cartoon, this game is more geared toward kids than adults. And as a kid's game, *Tarzan* is excellent. There are plenty of items to collect, a variety of levels to play through and a lot of extras from the film.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	5	5



Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Publisher: Activision
Developer: Edge of Reality
Featured In: EGM #126
Players: 1-2
Supports: Memory Pak, Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Likeable cartoon tricks
Worst Feature: Bumsome N64 Pad
Web Site: www.activision.com



Not having reviewed the PlayStation version of *Tony Hawk*—but hearing a lot of good things about it—I wondered what all of the fuss was about. Now that I've played the N64 version, I know **THIS IS the most enjoyable skateboarding game I've ever played.** From start to finish the game is put together incredibly well—the graphics, control, play modes, difficulty balance, etc. The Career Mode had me coming back for more again and again. I really like how you HAVE to learn how to do a lot of the tricks, and how to combine them, in order to advance to the later levels (don't worry, you'll want to learn them). It makes for a very natural progression through the game. Furthermore, the levels are jam-packed with ramps, rails and more to do tricks with. Half of the fun is finding interesting combinations—say, from a ramp to a rail, through a pane of glass to another rail. The more stuff you link, the more points you get. And from what I've gathered from various skate tapes I've seen (I'm afraid I just don't have the balls to skate in real life), the trick animations are spot-on. I also like the choice of music, and the quality of it (although, it gets a bit repetitious at times). Basically, if you're down to this, if you want a skateboarding game on your N64, you shouldn't look anywhere else. Buy *Tony Hawk*—you won't be disappointed. **Shawn**

Shawn

THPS on the N64 is an ultra-funful part of one of my favorite games last year. There's little else to say except repeat what we raved about back in issue #126. **Edge of Reality did a great job fitting the tunes onto a cart!** It doesn't sound so good, but it sure beats generic N64 synth. They've also improved the graphics quite a bit. There's less clipping on some of the more chaotic levels, and the game looks much sharper in general. Highly recommended. **Che**

Che

At first I was skeptical as to whether or not the N64 could do this game justice. Having played the PS version, I can say that this does it. **Tony Hawk was a fun game on the PlayStation, and it's fun on the N64.** The music tends to get old real quick, but it's amazingly good quality for the N64. One can appreciate the fact that this game is not only very true to how skateboarding looks, but it's got the arcade qualities of what makes a game good. **Chris**

Chris

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater continues to amaze me, even on the N64. It's great. It's a touch smoother than the PS version and maybe slightly better looking as well. **The game's strongest selling point, however, continues to be its intuitive trick system and flawless camera work.** Immediately upon launch from any ramp the camera shifts to display everything you need to see—it's very good that way. The gameplay, music, atmosphere...it's all topnotch. **Dean**

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	9



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured in: EGM #246
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock, Flight Stick
Best Feature: Stick visuals
Weak Feature: Weak story
Web Site: www.namco.com



No doubt about it: The third Ace Combat game is easily the most visually thrilling flight title on the PlayStation. From the detailed cities to the wavy glint cast by the sun and moon on the sea stretching below, the wild blue yonder's wonders have never looked more realistic. It's just a shame the rest of the game feels like a step backward for the series: Namco's cut-rate translation is the main culprit here. The Japanese version is a two-disc game rick with ancillary characters, slick FMV and a gripping plot. That's all been gutted from the U.S. release. Instead, we're only treated to occasional pages of text that flash on the screen and condense the complex plot into a barely coherent Cliff's Notes version. Instead of the first-class experience of the Japanese original, we're stuck with a fun but so-so flight. You do get a lot of missions—35 in all. They just don't deliver the white-knuckle ride of Ace Combat 2. Play this game on the hardest setting, because normal mode is too easy. Bogies rarely shoot back, and splashing them is never a problem. You'll encounter some novel scenarios. One mission, set in orbit, has you darting about in a laser-equipped shuttle. You'll career through the core of an underground city. You even get to land or refuel in midair once in a while. Nevertheless, AC3 is a disappointment. **Chris**

Since it's a newcomer to the Ace Combat series I'll keep this review simple. Things I like: The sharp, highly detailed graphics. Easy-to-control aircraft with intuitive controls and decent arcade/sim balance. Graphic effects that look and feel satisfying. And finally, the fact that you can belly-scrrape the ground without crashing. Bad things: The story line is convoluted and somewhat confusing. I wish you could destroy more structures on the ground. **Dean**

This would be far more worthwhile if it was a bit more challenging. It looks fantastic, boasts a lot of good stuff to keep you excited, but if you're a halfway competent game player you'll wish through it in no time. Certainly more imaginative than previous Ace Combats. It tries very hard to blend the "real" bits from PC sims with arcade-game sensibilities. Things like the padlock view make a big difference to the feel of the game. Something to see. **John**

Visually, AC3 gets incredibly high marks. It's easily the best-looking game in the series. But as we all know, fancy graphics only go so far. Enemies aren't near aggressive enough, making the game's 30-missions much easier than I'd like. Plus there just isn't much to the story. In fact, there isn't really a coherent story at all. Missions (though interesting and mostly fun) just kind of come along. You finish one, and then move onto the next, etc. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	6



Publisher: Psysnosis
Developer: Psysnosis
Featured in: EGM #247
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock, Flight Stick
Best Feature: Mission variety
Weak Feature: Sloopy amenities
Web Site: www.pyssnosis.com



Colony Wars: Red Sun is not the so-frustrating you'll-bust-your-joyed experience that was Colony Wars: Vengeance. Designed by a new team at Psysnosis' Leeds studio, Red Sun lets you save your game after every mission instead of after every three or so as in the previous games. And the missions themselves unfold in a more game-friendly structure. Instead of the branching mission tree of the past two games, Red Sun dices out a handful of sorties at a time. You, playing as a mercenary pilot, may opt to fly only the missions that tickle your fancy and avoid the rest. Every once in a while you come across missions you must play to advance the story, but none of them is exceedingly tough or frustrating. (In fact, most enemies are fairly stupid and easy to blast.) The only downside to the new free-form mission structure is that Red Sun has lost a bit of the epic feel of the past. But the story that's buried beneath all the unrelated missions here is still clever and gripping. Mission variety is once again the strong point of this series. The game thankfully stays away from many annoying escort missions and has you doing everything from capturing protected space blobs for profit to entering Thunderbolt, a lethal flight-combat game show of the future. You get more fighters and weapons to choose from this time, too. **Chris**

By far a better game than the fatally fizzling Colony Wars: Vengeance, Red Sun delivers well-designed missions, an excellent story and more than enough ways to customize your ship. You eventually access a vast arsenal of specialized guns, missiles and performance-boosting gadgets. A few bosses may be tough to topple, but most missions are more fun than frustrating. At least you can finally save after every mission. It's about time! **Chc**

A new development team for CW: Red Sun has done wonders for the game's demeanor. After all, while Vengeance looked great (as does Red Sun) and played like a champ, several of the missions were next to impossible. Red Sun's difficulty level is very reasonable. In addition, the music and sound effects are awesome. They included a live orchestra for the soundtrack. Loads of ship upgrades, interesting missions and a good story lack this one up. **Dean**

While not boasting as coherent a story as the previous games, Red Sun is certainly extremely playable. The ground-based missions are a big improvement over Vengeance's, and the space battles are much tighter and action-packed. There's no racing around trying to find a fight. The trademark gorgeous graphics are still here, but now they're supplemented by some wonderful orchestral music that really sets a movie-like tone. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	8	7



Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Featured in: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Making traps, finding new combos
Weak Feature: Disjointed English text
Web Site: www.tecmo.com



Deceptively simple, in this third installment you set up traps to thwart the bad guys' attempts to kill you. This is one of those rare occasions in an action game where no two people are going to have the same playing style. It's non-linear to a point—restricted, yet free, if that makes sense. As you finish missions you get new trap pieces which you can use to make your own combinations. Don't like the layout of a particular room? Walk to the next one. But the major thing holding this game back are the awkward English sentences. A little bit of polishing and BAM—gripping story. Music is moody and fits the tone of the whole game. Graphics are quite good, especially in spots where the lights go out and come back on (one of the enemies casts a spell for darkness...most annoying thing in the world). The lack of analog control annoyed me a bit at first, but it actually makes more sense to use the digital pad in a game like this—and there's a button you can just press to automatically face your enemies. After you've done with the regular game, there's a trap license mode—very similar to license tests in driving games—and plenty of challenge levels to tackle (and you've gotta be real good to get through them). With every new Deception game it gets more flushed-out. Let's hope the next one's got multiplayer online play. **Chris**

This is a very moody game which is only rarely spoiled by some appalling translation work. They should've changed some of the names too...Chen—Queen Margaria! Moments that are supposed to be tense end up just being funny and it spoiled it for me. It is a very thorough game though, and you'll find yourself being well and truly sucked in. Pulling off trap combos can be very satisfying...and you'll invest hours in mastering it. **John**

What Deception 3 lacks in dementia it makes up for in addictive gameplay and superb graphics. The actual in-game environments are rich in detail. It's just too bad the trap effects themselves aren't always that impressive. In terms of replay value though, DD definitely packs enough substance. Between the 24 some story levels, and a knuckle-biting expert mode, DD will keep you in front of your PS for days. Be warned, bad English ahead. **Chc**

Deception 3 is a bit of an enigma for me. The story is quite fun, once again providing a great alternative to the typical knight-in-shining-armor RPG story line. On the other hand, the goofy dialogue takes away greatly from that. The replay value here is pretty good...this chapter is amazingly addictive, even though it's just its edge a bit from the previous two installments. If you liked the first time, you won't be disappointed here...for the most part. **Shoc**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	8	8

Die Hard Trilogy 2



Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: n-Space
Featured in: EGM #127
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Shooting style of play
Worst Feature: Third-person action mode
Web Site: www.foxinteractive.com



The original DHT combined three genres—a third-person action game, a shooting game, and a driving game—in one nifty package. And while this sequel does essentially the same thing, it doesn't do it quite as well. Let's break it down by genre. First, there's the third-person action-type gameplay. It's littered with tiny graphical glitches like clipping and polygon drop-out here and there. And the AI is either really smart, or really dumb. **Sometimes enemies just stand there while you shoot them.** Overall, it's tedious, and would score a 5.0 on its own. Next, there's the driving portion of the game. The control is the main problem here. All too often you get stuck on objects jutting out from the sides of a particular area. Using reverse and then drive (as you would in most driving games to get out of a jam) proves to be a ridiculously tedious process—it's better just to restart the level. Thankfully, you don't experience this as much as the city driving levels (which are actually pretty fun). I give this part of the game a 6.0. Lastly, there's the shooting part of DHT-2: it's easily the best part of the game, and is GunCon-compatible. There are a huge number of power-ups, and plenty of things to blow up. I give it a 7.5. When you group the three genres together and throw in the story line and what not, it gets an additional half point.

Shawn

I never played the first Die Hard Trilogy game, so I have nothing to compare this with. But as it is, this is a collection of what would be three barely above-average games made to be one. I think the clipping Shawn mentioned is intentional, like McClane's supposed to see through walls. The gun game and driving games are also both really average on their own. The middle setting of the game is fine, but it could've used more attention to each part.

Chris

It can't touch Synchron Filter but DHT 2 is not the worst I've played. If anything it tries to do a bit too much. I could've lived without the clunky, almost laughable driving portion. It's not needed and it's not fun. The fight gun stuff is OK but again, why? Sadly, much of the game is given to you. You can see through walls and enemies line up to get shot. Sell, I like DHT 2 to a point, but I can't recommend it unless you're really into these games. Give it a rent instead.

Dean

The original DHT was quite...original for the time (combining three totally unrelated genres into a decent package). Now that the "thrill" of three-games-in-one is old news, the arrival of DHT 2 is so big deal. It's a bigger "no big deal" when you actually play. Some parts are frustrating, because of poor level design. Some parts are plain no fun, because of repetitive gameplay. DHT 2 is a nice distraction, but nothing to yell "Yippeee-hi-yay" over.

Shoe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	5	4



Fear Effect



Publisher: Eidus
Developer: Kronos Digital Ent.
Featured in: EGM #127
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Good lead...the story and atmosphere!
Worst Feature: Controls, boss battles
Web Site: www.eidus.com



It's a little Indiana Jones, it's a little Blade Runner. It's a little Seth Sense, survival horror and John Woo. Fear Effect is a lot of things, and for the most part, everything's done right. This game is an amazing cinematic experience and is more impressive in the storytelling and drama department than Metal Gear Solid. The plot is full of the types of surprises and twists you'd only think would happen in a grown-up movie. Add to that the terrific graphics (with gorgeous and immersive FMV backgrounds on every screen), ambient sound, anime-like cinematics, smooth transitions from movies to gameplay and solid voice acting, and you have here one of the coolest and slickest games you'll ever find on the PS. A few problems nag me though. The controls can be somewhat clunky. This is especially noticeable during boss fights, when the sluggish movement becomes a bigger enemy to you than the opponent itself. Speaking of bosses, some of them have this lame weak point hot spot that only opens up during certain situations that don't necessarily make sense. Other complaints include a few puzzles that have a kindergarten level of difficulty and a short, overall game length (which was only disappointing because I wanted the experience to last much longer). **From intro to the different endings...this game blew me away.**

Shoe

Integrating is one way to describe Fear Effect. Sounds like hype but the characters, plot, the Blade Runner-like ambience, it all melds together to create quite a surrealistic thriller. No doubt it'll keep you glued to the set for the duration. The fortunate part is, no one element weakens the game. If it had bad control or an impossible puzzle it would ruin the vibe. If anything it's a little obvious at times but nothing major. I highly recommend this one.

Dean

You really wouldn't know that this was an American game. In terms of production values and storyline it has a lot in common with the very best that anime has to offer. Despite some rigid control issues (which you get used to), over-stylized puzzles and the fact that it's a bit short for four discs' worth of game, it has to be said that **Fear Effect is top-notch.** The plot is truly superb and it's filled with twists and surprises. A simple "adult" game.

John

Three things keep FE from receiving a higher score: the clunky aiming system, the obvious puzzles, and the length of the game. Thankfully, you can learn to deal with the first two minor problems. And as far as the length of the game goes...well, the experience is simply amazing so the game's length doesn't matter much. FE is interesting, with a lot of twists and other spunky bits, and as entertaining as any good movie. Plus, I love the stylized visuals.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	8	7



Front Mission 3



Publisher: Square EA
Developer: Square
Featured in: EGM #128
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Mature story, deep gameplay
Worst Feature: Graphics are a bit outdated
Web Site: www.squareoft.com



I remember the long nights I spent with the import of FM3 last winter. Every minute I spent wrestling with the Japanese text, deriving half-measureings and generalities from the kanji, I longed—no, I prayed—for Square to bring this over to the U.S. Now I'm happy to report that FM3 has more than survived the translation—in fact, it's **my favorite game from Square since FVIIII last summer.** Behind FM3's straightforward (but never simplistic) turn-based tactics engine is a dynamic world of politics and characters. In-between battles (there are 130 scenarios in all, you're given free reign to customize your mech in any combination of ways you see fit) what really adds to the strategy on the battlefield is the whole notion of salvaging enemy mechs to overhaul your own. You begin to think twice about obliterating that rare enemy model. Plus, the ability to mix and match body parts and weapons ultimately gives you unlimited flexibility to prep for the field. The battles themselves are strangely addictive; those who found FF Tactics to be long-winded will like FM3's 15- to 20-minute battles. You see, it's a perfect tension between story and battles—both are compelling enough to make you play the next stage before you hit the sack. I could go on and on about this game all day. Look, you like mechs and tactics? Get FM3!

Ché

Just when I was getting burned out on turn-based strategy, Front Mission 3 comes along and makes me a true believer again. It's the sci-fi setting that got me hooked. Mech battle animation is fantastic, the in-game cinematics are well-done and the FMV is downright incredible (if only there was more). Combat itself isn't quite as deep as what you'll find in FF Tactics-style games, but the load of mech-construction options make up for it.

Crispin

It's about time someone brought out a non-fantasy, non-magical tactics game on the PlayStation. The mech theme alone makes Front Mission 3 worth playing. The coop level of play (with nearly unlimited customization options), immersive story line and backdrop make the game worth covering. **This is an amazing game that deserves your attention.** Make sure to set aside some good time...this sucker is loooooong.

Shoe

This is the first time Square's brought a front mission to the U.S., and they couldn't have selected a better game for its debut. There's so much background to the story that you'll believe that things will actually be like this 300 years from now (and if it is, I hope I'm reincarnated as a Japanese mech pilot). It's not usually into heavy strategy in an RPG, but the battles are just long enough so there's never a dull moment. A must for any fan of strategy RPGs.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	7



Publisher: SCEA
Developer: Clap Hanz
Featured In: EGM #22B
Players: 1-6
Supports: Multi-tap
Best Feature: Great golf physics
Worst Feature: Not enough turfs!
Web Site: www.sony.com

Happily my enthusiasm won't come across too grossly in this review, but I must say I really, really like this game. Clap Hanz (the new developer) has taken a great golf engine and made it better. Sounds like a cliché but it's true. The way the ball reacts to wind, spin, the slants of the fairways and greens...it's all spot-on. No other (except Mario Golf!) gives you as many variables to play with. Gameplay involves much more than simply nailing the power and release points. It's factoring the wind direction and velocity, trees, water hazards, etc., etc. With such a solid base, the rest is gravy. The anime players have been replaced with corny American characters—a fat lady, a muscle dude, and so on. In addition, Gek, Sweet Tooth and Sir Dan from MediEvil, are hidden within (I have the strongest antibodies). Another useful feature: lets you select custom clubs to best suit your playing style. They include: Big Ak, Turbo Spin and Pinhole. Ball choices are more limited but offer heavy spin and distance. Turbo Spin works great because it lets you slick your shots just where you want them. If you do it really well, it leaves a trail of flame as it backtracks. My only complaint involves the mapping on the greens. It's a little vague as to which way the turf lies. Other than that, **love this damn game.** Go buy it today. **Dean**

It may not seem that different from the original at first, but Hot Shots 2 is in fact much improved and worth grabbing—even if you're still addicted to the first game. In addition to being fine-tuned, the game play itself is more realistic (especially putting). And while that makes for a harder game, it also means HS2 is a deeper experience. The secret characters are a nice touch and fun to whip out in multiplayer. **This is the only golf game you'll need.** **Crispin**

There's a pretty good argument for Hot Shots 2 not exactly needing a sequel. After all, there wasn't actually much wrong with the original. Still, here we are, and if anything I think it has to be said that the charm of it all has been spoiled somewhat. Opening new stuff up is cool, and the Sony franchise characters make a nice diversion—but I don't understand why it now has to play more realistically. It's harder now, and consequently not quite as fun. **John**

Sporty gamers and non-sporty gamers (like myself) can pick up Hot Shots 2 and have a rip-roaring good time. You could say it brings these two warring factions together in harmonious golfing bliss. **As you'd expect, the play mechanics are perfect—** I never had to question why a ball landed or rolled a certain way. I also like the cheasy stereotypical golfers (especially that comb-over dude) much better than the fat-headed anime versions. **Buy it.** **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	8	10



Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock, Analog
Best Feature: Cartoonish graphics, lotsa fun
Worst Feature: A little on the short side
Web Site: www.capcom.com

If you're looking for cold, serious platform action with no humor whatsoever, don't play this game. But if you're looking for a fun, challenging romp starring Mega Man Legends' main villain, then you'll want to play Tron Bonne. The game is divided up into missions, each with three levels of difficulty. They range from a botched bank robbery (or several of them) to stealing cows and pigs from a farm. There's even a new puzzle level that'll have you scratching your head for hours. One of the more interesting features is that you have 40 Servbots, all of which reside somewhere on your trusty ship, the Geseischaft. You can assign them duties, like developing new weapons, changing the look of your ship, changing the BGM on your ship. You can also send them out on scouting missions for items while you're finishing missions. They each have stats, and as you complete missions, more rooms of your ship are completed for these guys to hang around in (including a Torture Room). Graphics are cartoony Capcom-style, and the voices are particularly well-done. Favorite Servbot line—"Look! It's a Treasure Chest. Can we use the Key Card to open it?" As fun as it is, it's still a little short and I never liked the Mega Man Legends style control (two enemies on screen, I can't decide what to lock onto). **Chris**

Tron Bonne is cute in a way but its target audience is a mystery to me. I guess fans of Mega Man would get the most out of it. The silly part is, it's kiddy in many ways but deep enough to be confusing for young gamers. All that crap about debt and bank robbing, plus managing the Servbots. **That stuff could get screwy real fast.** I categorize this as an oddball title that only a select few will appreciate. Probably the same guys who like Intending Sock. **Dean**

Lighthearted, interesting. These are just a couple of the words that come to mind as I play Tron Bonne. So, if you're in the mood for this sort of thing with a Mega Man Legends style, you'll like Tron Bonne. There are plenty of challenging puzzles to complete, and other things to do in the game (whether you're completing one of the main missions, or sending out your Servbots). Myself, I've been in the mood for games with a little more edge lately. **Shawn**

Bear in mind you're gonna need to stomach a lot of ultra-quirky stuff while playing Misadventures of Tron Bonne. From the squawky voice-over to the day-eyed Servbots, this game scores a mile high on the ain't-that-adorable scale. Yet MoTB is one deceptively deep game. You'll engage around in lots of vehicles and play even more addictive mini-games. Tinkering with your Servbots is nearly a game in itself. Ridiculous? Yes. Fun? Of course. **Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	6	6



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: Electronic Arts
Featured In: EGM #24
Players: 1-3
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Lots of substance
Worst Feature: Carry commentary
Web Site: www.ea.com

For a goofy racing game aimed at kids, NASCAR Rumble packs a lot of depth and universal appeal. You get a heap of familiar NASCAR drivers and cars (trucks too!) plus wacky hidden vehicles. If that weren't enough, Cale Yarborough, Richard Petty, Benny Parsons and several other legends are included. So you have all the brand recognition and accessories you could dream about plus dumb trucks, buses and tractors. This game has it all. Before you get too excited however, remember it's still primarily a kid's game. **Forget about realistic physics and like-licke racing, these cars bounce around the tracks like pinballs.** High-velocity roll-overs, spin-outs and hardcore demolition-style racing are par for the course. Adding to the combat action are a host of weapon-related weapons including Storm Cloud, Freeze, Lighting, Twister and a bunch more in the end. Rumble has a nice balance of NASCAR appeal and combat racing excitement. It doesn't take much skill to drive so most of the fun comes from grabbing power-ups and cutting down the competition. Shortcuts and other tricky stuff add to the carnival atmosphere as well. And, while kids should like this game, racing fans in general will appreciate the great frame-rate, car selection and two-player action. It's a nice departure from the serious NASCAR sim. **Dean**

If Daytona USA on the Saturn had been like NASCAR Rumble here, I think I would have been quite content. Rumble is fun, over-the-top arcade racing that kept me coming back for more. Why? Well, the game's physics aren't hard to speak of, but its single-player mode is loaded with bonus cars, tracks and power-ups. If you found the steering to be a tad touchy when it came to some of the harder tracks, if you're looking for mindless fun, here it is. **Cho**

This is a game designed for all of you who don't like the idea of taking your thumb off the gas button. I was very pleasantly surprised by this, and while it's not the greatest racer to grace the PlayStation, it's certainly a bit different from the licensed car, GT-n-ops that we're seeing all the time. The car dynamics are arcadey but cool, there are plenty of shortcuts, loads of weapons and there's a ton of stuff to open up. Well worth looking at. **John**

I think Rumble is a lot of fun, so I guess that means I'm a child...according to Dean anyway. Yeah, it may be on the superficial side, and it may not have the realistic physics and control slip-driving junkies crave, but it's fun. I like Rumble's to-the-point style (you're racing and having a good time in a matter of seconds). The incredible graphics help, too. But I could've done without the annoying quips, and the wailing guitar solos—that stuff is lame. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	6	7	7

Syphon Filter 2



Now that enemies can take head shots at you, get ready to do a lot of evasive rolling, and of course, better get used to the picture below.



The first SF combined the best elements of games like Metal Gear Solid and Tomb Raider, with just the right balance of difficulty between its action and puzzle-oriented levels. The fact that it had a decent plot and gripping interludes only added to my surprise. Unfortunately, it appears the only thing that carried over to SF2 was the story, which picks up tightly where the first one left off. Even as it resides on two CDs, almost all the levels on disc are a complete let-down. It isn't until the beginning of disc 2 that the game even resembles the SF I fell in love with last year. Instead of tense and dynamic environments that give you room to savor your style of play, SF2 requires you to do things exactly as they're planned out, as a result, you often feel like you've plinned around their limited events triggers. Imagine a Metal Gear Solid where the game ends every time you're spotted by a guard—that's how frustrating SF2 is! Each level is a laborious exercise of trial-and-error, where you constantly learn things the hard way. And to top it off, enemies can now perform head shots with uncanny accuracy, be it in pitch-black fog, or from rooftops against a running target. That's not genreplay, that's frustration. You don't understand how it breaks my heart. SF2 looks like SF, but it's only a hollow shell of its former self.

Chh

It's not that Syphon Filter 2 is a bad action game. It's just a bad sequel to the excellent original. Cheap death lurks everywhere. Enemies store headshots on you before you even know they were there. Bedies too grenades all around your position. Stealth missions screech to a halt every time you're caught. The numerous checkpoints help, since you don't have to cover too much old ground when you mess up, but expect major frustration.

Crispin

The story of Syphon Filter 2 could be extremely cool. It would actually be quite fantastic if it didn't have the game associated with it. All the tedious running around and shooting stuff does very little to further the pace of the story. Sequels should, as a rule, improve on their predecessors, but SF2 (while more "epic" than the original) is a far more linear and tedious affair. It's harsh too, you'll by some sections sooooo many times before you get it right.

John

Having never played the first game, I didn't know what to expect. I'd heard plenty about how good the first game was. What I found was an incredibly frustrating action game. Whatever happened to the concept of fair play? And although some people are turned off by the extremely low-detailed character renders in the cinema, I think it works to achieve a real comic-book look. After hearing how good the first game was, this is a bit of a letdown.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	4

Publisher: 989 Studios
Developer: Eidetic
Featured In: EGM #128
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: You can now save at checkpoints
Worst Feature: Frustrating levels, poor multiplayer
Web Site: www.989studios.com



Lion is now a playable character on some of the levels. The way Logan "breathes" her name, it always sounds like "Leon."

Syphon Filter 2 will sell. You know it, we know it. But it's our job to tell you that it's a subpar sequel to one of the best games last year; and in typical 989 fashion, SF2 is sloppy, rushed and reshaped. The game engine itself offers no substantial improvement, other than a feeble "jump" function that you can't even control, and the ability to save at checkpoints. However, the price we pay for such minor improvements far outweighs the rewards. It seems that by allowing you to save (and restart) at each checkpoint, Eidetic has open license to create some of the most linear and frustrating levels ever. What happened to the classic arctic base level from the original SF, where triggering an alarm sent you up shit creek but kept the game rolling just the same? As it is, SF2 has lost all sense of spontaneity. Expect to run each gauntlet over and over again with machine-like preci-



sion until you've figured out the lay of the land. And why did Eidetic destroy the balance between run-and-gun versus stealth gameplay? Overall, there are a lot more stealth missions, each filtered through SF2's harsh mission parameters (read: get caught, start over and over and over and over). However, there's a cool string of levels in Russia that really bring back the old SF feeling, but it's over all too soon and before you know it, Logan's sneaking around with his Taser again. A huge disappointment comes in the form of SF2's multiplayer mode. Granted, it's nice being able to unlock characters and levels to use in DM, but what's the point when the actual DM game is so barebones and shallow? Two-player versus always comes down to grabbing the grenade launcher, locking the target and kaboom, instant frag. If you're lucky, you'll pull off a non-camper head shot—thanks to how painfully slow it is to aim your gun. We know it was silly of us to expect a real sequel from 989, but hey...we can always dream.



Publisher: THQ
Developer: Yuke's
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock, Multi-tap
Best Feature: This is the best wrestling engine yet
Worst Feature: Matches take too long
Web Site: www.thq.com

Wrestling titles went stale last year, with new games being nothing more than minuscule updates of previous editions. Thankfully THQ is bringing us SmackDown!, a game that really pushes the genre to the next level. This disc should really please wrestling fans, because it does the best job of any game so far of bringing home that wrestling soap-opera feel. With the backstage activities, personal vignettes, special referee matches (if you play as the ref, you can decide how slowly or quickly you want to count someone out) and more, this has that certain RPQ feel (interaction missing in all other titles so far though it could be done better). Even better, the game engine far surpasses anything else on the market. Not only does SmackDown! put all others to shame graphically, it's fast, it controls well, and it has incredible collision detection. You know how in other games, you can't hit an opponent because a) you don't have him targeted or b) he's in the middle of an animation (like getting up) that isn't programmed to be recognized by attacks? Well, with SmackDown!, you can hit pretty much everyone, if they're within range. If one knocked down three guys with one roundhouse punch? You can also attack folks in just about any situation or location. This is a great engine with a lot of this backing it.

Shoe

SmackDown! has more depth and personality than any wrestling game I've played. For starters, the story line incorporates enough WWF shtick to satisfy any fan. Realistic versus complete with TV-style camera work and animated crowds charge the circuit atmosphere to an impressive level. The move interface is the best feature however. No combos, just direction and one button-it works well. SmackDown! is a must-buy for wrestling fans.

Dean

Acclaim and EA, look out. SmackDown! is the new **wrestlefest to beat**—and it's not just 'cause this thing looks so much better than the competition. The ultra-fast gameplay and quick-change camera angles really get your blood surging, while collision detection is nearly dead-on. You get all the modes you could want (you can even play as the ref). SmackDown! also manages to capture some of the soap-opera style story elements of the real WWF.

Crispin

SmackDown! is the play mode and option-filled, graphically impressive wrestling game fans of the sport have been waiting for. Sure, sequels and new versions of wrestling games from various companies have been fun, but there was never really a must-buy to set them apart from their predecessors. Not the case in SmackDown!. In addition, **the thing controls like a dream**, and I like how you can hit anybody at any time, if you only watched wrestling on TV.

Shawn

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	7	9	9



Publisher: AgeTec
Developer: From Software
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Best Feature: Good multiplayer support
Worst Feature: Dated graphics, rebated engine
Web Site: www.age-tec.com

Armored Core's going on almost four years now and it still holds up very well. Sure, the graphics are dated, but the gameplay has drawn such a fundamentally devoted crowd that From Software has felt no need to change it. It's been a long time since we busted out the link cable, but Armored Core almost demands it. Split-screen head-to-head is fun, but ultimately a limiting experience. There's an extra disc (to use for link mode) that contains a bunch of extra mech parts and DW arenas too. The question is...do we need another add-on pack for Armored Core?

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	5	6



Publisher: Pygmalion
Developer: Pygmalion to Detail
Featured In: EGM #126
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: All the extra stuff you can open
Worst Feature: A tad on the easy side
Web Site: www.pygmalion.com

Thankfully, many of the problems in the first RC have been fixed or at least improved upon, making this sequel a much more enjoyable experience. Most noticeably, you don't get all ripped around for no apparent reason as much, and when you do it's pretty easy to straighten yourself out. The speed is quite amazing as well (especially when you combine turbo). There are a good variety of courses (although some could've been longer), and plenty of devastating weapons. All this and a ton of fun stuff to open makes RC2 a futuristic racer to consider.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	6	8



Publisher: Nintendo/Capcom
Developer: Nintendo Software Development
Featured In: EGM #127
Players: 1
Supports: Game Boy Color
Best Feature: Old-school gameplay to the max
Worst Feature: That it didn't happen sooner
Web Site: www.nintendo.com

What's really great about Armored Core isn't just the fact that it marks the return of one of the NES's greatest games, it's that Nintendo Software Development has taken an already classic game and made it better. They've improved the graphics, the interface, created a female character (so you have two commandos to choose from), and made other adjustments to the game to make it that much better. I never played the previous arcade and Game Boy versions, but this is simply a great portable game. But be warned...this is a hardware game. Not as difficult as I remember the NES game being, but not easy. The additions of modes like first-person target practice and top-down, Ikari Warriors-style shooting action mixes things up a bit but keeps it all as a cohesive whole. Why Capcom has not brought Bionic Commando back before this—and really, I credit Nintendo Software Development with this one—is beyond me. Control is very tight, and you never feel like you're taking cheap hits. Unlike many third-party Game Boy titles, the control is not dictated by animation that has to finish before you can move—after a while it becomes second-nature. It's also a rare breed, as there aren't that many GB action titles to begin with. A note that worthy addition to any portable fan's library.

Chris

Once upon a time, I was a huge fan of the arcade Bionic Commando. Even though the NES version made the game much-needed death for a home console experience, I never gave it a chance. Now, playing it on the GBC, I've come to realize what I've missed all these years. Although I'm not sure if it's some of the things they've changed...like what happened to the Nazi regime of the B-Bit version? Now you're up against Ming from Flash Gordon.

Chc

Like Ghosts 'n Goblins, Bionic Commando is a classic brought over to the Game Boy. But unlike G'nG, BC has a good deal of new stuff added to it (a "sniper mode," an extra character and more). This stuff makes the game even better than the original. Furthermore, the thing plays as well as it looks on a regular home system (unlike most GB games that control like crap). If you've been hankering for a solid GB action game, look into this one.

Shawn

If I could name one thing I like about the GBC (a system I wish would retire to make room for the next generation of handhelds), it's that it's home to plenty of old school, hand-picked games. This machine is giving a lot of classics new life. Bionic Commando is especially enjoyable since it's not a straight port. The new gameplay elements and levels make this the new worth checking out (that is, if you're a fan of the original, or you still dig 2D side-scrollers).

Shoe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	6



Rainbow Six

Publisher: Red Storm
Developer: Crawford
Featured In: EGM #123
Players: 1
Supports: None
Best Feature: Captures story of PC game
Worst Feature: Too slow paced
Web Site: www.redstorm.com



It's amazing what they can cram into the Game Boy these days. Whether something is a good idea or not, you have to admire the talent that goes into cramming the major elements of a game like *Rainbow Six* and making it 2D, 8-Bit and portable. Somehow Crawford has managed to capture all of the basic story elements from the first PC game and convey them adequately. Pretty amazing. In fact, it actually manages to cram in more of the strategy elements than Rebellion's lackluster *PlayStation* version. Impressive indeed. The only problem is, the resulting game is nowhere near as fun or as tense as its grown-up 3D brothers and sisters. Part of the fun with the other version is sneaking around the environments and ducking down so you're not seen. The transfer to top-down 2D kinda saps this element, and you end up just walking around maps that are too damn big, and not filled with enough bad guys to shoot at. By removing the uncertainty and the stealth aspects and neglecting to replace them with all-out action, it seems that Red Storm has missed out on something that could've been very absorbing. Unfortunately, it all ends up being rather boring instead. This is an impressive game "on paper," but you'll very quickly tire of it. Graphically it can get hard on the eyes at times too.

John

Rainbow Six for the Game Boy tries to cram in every feature of its PC big brother. You get all the weapons, the gear, the team members, the planning mode and the story. Trouble is, not much survived the militarization. Planning is a chore—especially figuring out how to place Go Codes. The game itself fails to capture the tension of the original. Hostages and teammates often get stuck on walls when following you. This thing's for patient gamers only.

Crispin

This game, on this platform makes zero sense, no matter how you look at it. By taking away the "first-person" POV, you're castrating the realism, atmosphere and tension of the original. Then you give the game a bunch of sophisticated options (like organizing squads and equipping agents), and you've automatically alienated the handheld shooting fans. What other demographic are you supposed to be reaching out to? Not this reviewer.

Che

If this was all the PC game was, I can't imagine having ever been interested in it. Who'd else was it to port this to the Game Boy anyway? There are just some platforms you shouldn't try to port games to. It's just too limited. *Rainbow Six* needs the kind of immersion afforded by 3D, or needs to be completely adapted to take advantage of the limits of 2D. Some have been able to achieve it, but this just isn't enough game to hold my interest.

Chris

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	7	4



Ghosts 'N Goblins

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Digital Eclipse
Featured In: EGM #129
Players: 1
Supports: None
Best Feature: Old-school feel
Worst Feature: It's tedious in parts
Web Site: www.capcom.com



We don't really need to tell you this game is hellu fun to play—you should know. After all, *GG* is a classic. And since this *GG* version is a near-perfect conversion, it retains those same classic qualities. Sure, the gameplay is a tad simple, and the graphics and sound are dated, but overall it's a lot fun (even on that little screen). What's more, if you haven't taken on an old-school platformer in awhile, it'll prove to be quite a task. But the trial is worth it. It will bring back those worn fuzzy memories of the good old days. Besides, it's better than most *GG* performers.

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	5	7



Worms Armageddon

Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Infogrames-Paris
Featured In: EGM #124
Players: 2-2
Supports: None
Best Feature: Hehe... it's portable!
Worst Feature: It's seriously disappointing
Web Site: www.infogames.com



We love *Worms*. From the first game to *Armageddon*, we've been fans for quite a while. The thought of playing this strategy game on the go did excite us, but so seconds into the thing, that excitement disappeared faster than you can yell "incoming!" The game lets you do so little (compared to the real deal), it's really not worth checking out. The lackluster graphics and controls don't help out any either. Even if you don't compare this game to big brother *LoC*, *PS*, *N64*, *PC*, it's still not fun. **WA for GBC is less on strategy and more on mindless bazooka shooting.**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	5	3



Gals Fighters

Publisher: SNK
Developer: Yusekobo
Featured In: EGM #128
Players: 1-2
Supports: Link Cable
Best Feature: All of SNK's women in one game
Worst Feature: AI wakes up when they're low on life
Web Site: www.snkusa.com



About time someone made an all-girl fighting game, don't ya think? SNK has so many women characters that it just makes sense. But there are still a few caveats (some surprising) of the guys from SNK's other fighters. Battles often begin very slowly, but as you get your opponent's health meter lower, they really heat up. It's as if the AI is based solely on how much hurt your opponent's got, and that point gets higher and higher as you work your way up. Perhaps the most innovative feature of *Gals Fighters* is the item system. You'll win items in battles, each of which you can use to your advantage. For example, some fill your special attack meter to full right off the bat, others take some energy away from your opponent at the start of the match, etc. Lose the match when equipped with an item, and it'll be stolen. In two-player battles, the winner can steal an item from the loser. So there's a lot more at stake than just your pride if you lose. The visuals in *Gals Fighters* are excellent. Animation is often a mix of serious attacks and humor. From Yuki screaming, "NO!" to Athena doing a burly one and a wand, you can tell the developer had fun with this game. Only thing really lacking is a lack of an In-Game moves list to look at in training mode. Otherwise, this is yet another superb handheld fighting game from SNK.

Chris

NGPC handheld fighters continue to show incredible evolution. As good as *Match of the Millennium* was last time around, *Gals Fighters* feels faster, more responsive, and actually looks better. The improvements are marginal, but they really do add a lot of drama to the fight. Two player mode is also handled nicely, with the option of losing or gaining "items" as you win or lose. **NGPC has actually given handheld fighting games credibility. Preps to them. Che**

The last handheld fighting game I played was *Street Fighter 2* on the old Game Boy a long time ago. Those of you who remember it will no doubt also recall that it was absolute crap. Imagine my surprise after popping in *Gals Fighters*. Wow. Not only is this the best handheld fighter I've ever played, it's also one of the best-looking handheld games I've seen. Like all fighting games, playing the computer does get old, so go get a buddy with a link cable ready.

Crispin

With an ad like *Match of the Millennium* to follow, *Gals Fighters* is a tough sell. The only real thing it's got going for it is the female-fatale theme. But will you want to play it after experiencing the huge cast and features of *LoC* (tag battles, mini-games, etc.) of SNK vs. Capcom? Probably not. **On its own, it's a decent game**—it's probably the second best fighter on the system. I just wish SNK would've kept pushing the envelope with the portable fighter genre.

Shoe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	5	7



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TRICK OF THE MONTH

Crazy Taxi (DC)

Four Awesome Codes

From the Mode Selection Screen, choose the Arcade or the Original Mode. Now choose the amount of time you want, and at the "Now Loading" Screen, press and hold the following buttons combinations until the Driver Select Screen appears:

No Arrows

Press and hold R-Trigger +Start. When the Driver Select Screen appears, you will see the words "No Arrows" in the lower-left corner of the screen. If you haven't memorized the locations, you will have to listen to your passengers and pay attention where they point.

No Destination Mark

Press and hold L-Trigger +Start. When the Driver Select Screen appears, you will see the words, "No Destination Mark" in the lower-left corner of the screen. You'll still see a small green outline around your destination point, but it won't be nearly as prominent as before.

Expert

Press and hold L-Trigger+R-Trigger+Start. When the Driver Select Screen appears, you will see the word "Expert" in the lower-left corner of the screen. The combination of No Arrows and No Destination Mark makes up the Expert Mode.

Hidden Bike

To unlock the bike, go to the Character Select Screen and highlight the driver you want. Now press L-Trigger+R-Trigger three times simultaneously. Then press button A to pick your driver. You will hear bicycle chimes to confirm it was entered correctly.



Refill Health

Hold L-Trigger and press Down, B, Up, Left, Up, Left.

Next Level Health

Hold L-Trigger and press Right, A, Left, Y, Up, Down.

Maximum Health

Hold L-Trigger and press Right, B, Down, Up, Down, Up.

Refill Magic

Hold L-Trigger and press Right, Right, Left, Y, Right, Down.

Maximum Magic

Hold L-Trigger and press Y, Right, Down, Right, Up, Y, Left.

Pass Through Barriers

Hold L-Trigger and press Down, B, B, Left, Right, Y, Up.

Wall Climbing

Hold L-Trigger and press Y, Down, X, Right, Up, Down.

Hurt Razel

Hold L-Trigger and press Left,B, Up, Up, Down.

Force

Hold L-Trigger and press Left, Right, B, Left, Right, Left.

Constrict

Hold L-Trigger and press Down, Up, Right, Right, B, Up, Up, Down.

Force Glyph



Hold L-Trigger and press Down, Left, Y, Down, Up.

Stone Glyph



Hold L-Trigger and press Down, B, Up, Left, Down, Right, Right.

Sound Glyph

Hold L-Trigger and press Right, Right, Down, B, Up, Up, Down.

Water Glyph

Hold L-Trigger and press Down, B, Up, Down, Right.

Sunlight Glyph

Hold L-Trigger and press Left, B, Left, Right, Right, Up, Up, Left.

Fire Glyph



Hold L-Trigger and press Up, Up, Right, Up, Y, X, Right.

Shift at Any Time

Hold L-Trigger and press Up, Up, Down, Right, Right, Left, B, Right, Left, Down.

Jim Krieger
Carbondale, IL

Re-Volt Many Codes

From the Main Menu, choose Start Race. Then select a Single Race. Now enter your name as one of the codes as shown below for various results.

MAGGOT- All of your cars are



now tiny racers.

CARTOON- This gives you access to all the cars.

TRACTION- This gives you all of the tracks.

OYOY- All weapons are available. While playing, press L-Trigger+R-Trigger to cycle through them.

YUEFO- You now have access to



the Probe U.F.O.

DREAMCAST

Legacy of Kain:

Soul Weaver

Many Codes

Press Start to pause in the middle of the game and enter any of these codes for the results as shown. You will hear a sound after each code is entered:



CHANCER- This will allow you to change cars in the middle of the race. Just press up or down at the Pause Menu to change your car.
FLYBOY- This gives you HiFi mode.
GOATY- This allows you to go into the progress table and edit your wins, losses, etc.

Vigilante 8: Second Offense

Many Codes

From the Main Menu, choose the Options Screen. From there, press the A button on Game Status, choose your player with A, and then press the L Shift+R Shift buttons simultaneously. From here, you can enter these passcodes for the results shown. You will hear a voice say, "Funky" when they are entered correctly. Each time you complete a code, you will have to press L Shift+R Shift to enter a new one.

No Enemies

Enter HOME_ALONE for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

No Delay Firing

Enter RAPID_FIRE for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Monster Wheels

Enter GO_MONSTER for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Suspended Cars

Enter JACK_IT_UP for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Heavier Cars

Enter GO_RAMMING for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Increased Enemy Attack

Enter UNDER_FIRE for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Deadlier Missiles

Enter BLAST_FIRE for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

GPU Picks Features

Enter QUICK_PLAY for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Quick Vehicles

Enter MORE_SPEED for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Slow Vehicles

Enter GO_SLOW_MO for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Floating Cars



Enter NO_GRAVITY for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

No Wheel Attachment Icons

Enter DRIVE_ONLY for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

Sequence of Movies



Enter LONG_MOVIE for your passcode. Press the A button to complete it.

NINTENDO 64

Toy Story 2 Level Select

On the Main Menu/Title Screen, use the analog stick (not the pad) and press it in the following directions: Up, Up, Up, Up, Down, Down, Up, Up, Down, Down, Down. You will hear an animal noise if the trick was done correctly. When you begin

your game, press Right on the analog stick to move to different stages. Now choose your level!

Kena Warrior Princess: Talisman of Fate

Cool Codes

For each trick, first go to the Main Menu Screen and quickly press Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Left, Right. You will hear a sound. Then enter the codes as shown. You will hear a sound when the code is complete.

Xena Vs Gabrielle (Hope) in Quest Mode



C-Left, C-Left, C-Left, C-Left.

Despair is a Playable Character

C-Left, C-Right, C-Left, C-Right.



Higher (Titan) Difficulty Level

C-Up, C-Down, C-Up, C-Down. A new difficulty setting called Titan will replace god difficulty.

PLAYSTATION

Crash Team Racing Unlock New Racers

At Main Menu Screen (with Adventure, Time Trial, etc.), press and hold L+R1 and enter one of these codes (works in any mode except Adventure):

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on Trickman treatment:

1. Donkey Kong 64 (N64)

Arcade Donkey Kong

First complete DK's Barrel Blast Inside Farcic Factory and then a level will appear. Grab the lever in front of the Donkey Kong Arcade game to play. You must win the game by beating all of the stages (four in all). Then beat the game once more to obtain the Nintendo Coin. Now, take pictures of six films with your camera. After returning to the Main Menu, go to the Mystery Menu and you will see an option to play the Arcade Donkey Kong game at any time!

2. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gain

To easily gain experience, simply switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When in battle, this Pokémon will appear. You can then switch Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon you want to build up has no initial attack in its first form.

3. Pokémon (Red) (GB)

Fight Safari Zone

Pokémon

Choose a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Go to the area in the Safari Zone where your desired Pokémon is. Stay there until time runs out. Go to the Seafloor Islands by surfing south of Fuchsia City. Don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (not including the Pokémon in the water on the way). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is half land, and



TRICKS

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Ripper Roo

Right, Circle, Circle, Down, Up.



Down, Right.

N. Trophy



Down, Left, Right, Up, Down,
Right, Right.

Jordan Raup
Honeye Falls, FL

Medal of Honor Many More Codes

From the Options Screen, choose "Password" then enter any of these codes into the Enigma Machine:
(These codes work in Multiplayer Mode.)

Unlock Wolfgang

Put in HOODUP as your code.

Unlock Bismarck

Put in WOOFWOOF as your code.

Unlock Otto

Put in HERRZOMBIE as your code.

Unlock Noah

Put in BEACHBALL as your code.

Unlock Von Braun

Put in ROCKETMAN as your code.

(These codes are unlocked in the Gallery Screen.)

Unlock the Making of Level 1 (history)

Put in INVASION as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 2 (history)

Put in BIGGREGTA as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 3 (history)

Put in DASBOOF as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 4 (history)

Put in STUKA as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 5 (history)

Put in KOMET as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 6 and 7 (history)

Put in TWOSIXTWO as your code.

Unlock the Making of Level 8 (history)

Put in VICTORYDAY as your code.

Pictures of the Development Team



Put in DWIMONTEAM as your code.

Secret Photo Gallery of Staff

Put in DWIGALLERY as your code.

L. Henson Picture

Put in COOLCHICK as your code.

A. Jones Picture



Put in AJRULES as your code.
(For the next two codes, load a saved game, enter the password, then high-light Mission Log and go to any previous stages.)

Audie Murphy Mode (Invincibility)

Enter MOSTMEDALS, turn this option on at Secret Codes Screen.

Wire Frames



Enter TRACERON as your code.
Turn this option on in the Secret Codes Screen.

Tony Chan
Malden, MA

Pong

Open Zones, Levels, Etc.



As soon as you see the "Zone 1" screen, press the Start button to pause. Now press L1, R1, L1, R1. Press Start again. Now choose any Zone in the game. This also opens up each stage and the

TOP 5 DRIVING CODES—GET OUTTA MY CAR!

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?	FOR WHAT GAME?	WHAT DOES IT DO?	HOW DO YOU DO IT?	SETTING
	Crash Team Racing (PS)	Unlock a New Racer	On the Main Menu Screen, press and hold LwRt simultaneously. With these held, press Down, Right, Triangle, Down, Left, Triangle, Up. You will hear a ringing sound. Now choose either Time Trial, Arcade, VS, or Battle. On the Player Selection Screen, you will see a new character at the bottom called "Penta Penguin."	00
	Driver (PS)	Invincibility	On the Main Menu, highlight the police car and then access the Cheats Menu. From here, you can activate the invincibility code. Press L2, L2, R2, R2, L2, R2, L1, R2, R1, L2, L1, L1.	000000
	Hot Wheels Turbo Racing (PS)	Turbos and Towjam Car	Enter either of the following codes on the Main Menu Screen. You will hear a sound to confirm correct entry. Unlimited Turbos: R2, L1, Square, Triangle, R1, L1, L1, R2. Towjam Car: Square, Triangle, L1, R1, L2, R2, Square, Triangle.	000
	Need for Speed: High Stakes (PS)	Cop Code	Enter the Game Option Screen and select the "User Name" option. Enter the name NFS_PD. This will allow any unlocked cop car to race on any track.	0
	Rally Cross 2 (PS)	Cheat Codes	Begin a new season and enter the following as your name to unlock these cheats: MOOBWOOB - All Cars PREVET - Veteran Level Tracks and Cars PREPRD - Pro Level Tracks and Cars	0000

\$40

Initiation Fee for the International Brotherhood of Magicians.
Good at tricks?
Got a shiny dagger?P
Maybe you should join us.
http://www.imo.org



second "level type." Go back to the Zone Selection Screen and press Start. This time press L2, R2, L2, R2. Press Start again. You now have access to the third "level type" and under the pause menu, a new option called, "Secrets" will be available. You can choose power-ups, pong size, etc. Check out all the classic Pong games in Zone 8!

tricks@zd.com

We want your tricks!
Next month, we want to feature as many cool games as possible.
Send us anything you have.

Tomorrow Never Dies Awesome Tricks

While playing, press Start to pause. Enter the following codes for the results as shown.

Immunity From Bullets
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Select.

Pass Through Walls



Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle.

Every Weapon and 50 Health
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, L1, L1, R1.
Mission Complete
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Select, Circle.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater Blowout Trick

This trick will blow open the game, plus give you a new character. From the Menu, access Career Mode. Begin a new game, press Start to pause. Press and hold the R2 button and enter



TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

half water. Surf on this section, keep going up and down on L. The next enemy will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time you will be able to fight them and use the other balls on them.

4. Gran Turismo 2 (PS)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

5. Pokémon (Blue) (GB)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

6. Tomorrow Never Dies (PS)

Health Restoration
During the game, press Start to pause. Then press Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Up, Up, Select.

7. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (PS)

Awesome Codes
Enter the following cheats while paused. If entered correctly, the screen will shake.

Rig Head Mode
Hold L1 and press Left, Up, X, Down, Up, X.

Special Available Anytime
Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle.

Get 1x Multiplier
Hold L1 and press Triangle, X, Triangle.

Slow Mo
Hold L1 and press Left, Square, Left, Square, Left, Square, Left.

Get All Practice Mode Levels
Hold L1 and press Square, Up, Left, Up, Circle, Triangle.

Quit the level you are playing and go to the menu. You will have all Practice Mode levels.

Awesome Kplorer Codes

Dino Crisis

Regina Codes

Infinite Health

865FECCC 550A

Have All Weapons

86626C00 504F

Have All Items

86626CFC 504F, 86626CFA 504F

86626C04 504F, 86626C02 504F

86626C08 504F, 86626C06 504F

86626C0C 504F, 86626C0A 504F

86626C10 504F, 86626C0E 504F

86626C14 504F

Have All Maps

865C5756 595A, 16626C38 504F

View First Ending (Press Select)

F65F6870 5A5A, 865FCDA0 5964

365FCDA0 595A

View Second Ending (Press Select)

F65F6870 5A5A, 865FCDA0 5964

365FCDA0 5959

View Third Ending (Press Select)

F65F6870 5A5A, 865FCDA0 5964

365FCDA0 595C

Save Anywhere (Press L1+L2)

F65F6870 5955, 865FCDA0 5957

Turbo Boost (Press X)

F65F6870 599A, 865FE8F8 5A5A

Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete

Alex Codes

Infinite HP

86711218 5C37

Max HP

86711216 5C37

Infinite MP

8671121C 5C37

Max MP

8671121A 5C37

Max Agility

86711224 5C37

Max Attack

86711220 5C37

Max Defense

86711220 5C37

Max Magic Endurance

86711228 5C37

Max Number Of Attacks

36711226 594F

Max Range

36711225 594F

Max Wisdom

86711222 5C37

Fast Level Up

86711254 5959, 86711252 595A

Infinite Money

86711602 59F2, 86711604 E7CF

Hot Wheels:

Turbo Racing

Unlimited Turbos P1

37DDC4A8343E

Unlimited Turbos P2

37F03DD8343E

Indestructible P1

(Press Select)

7700F63C7333, 377A18553436

Indestructible P2

(Press Select)

7722DB75C233, 37C9F4853433



TRICKS

TOP 10 TRICKS

(CONTINUED)

8. Pokémon Pinball (GB)

Animate Unevolved Pokémon

To animate the Pokémon you've caught, go to the Pokédex and pick a regular, unevolved Pokémon. Press and hold the Start button to see the character move!

9. Pokémon Snap (N64)

Get Level 7

The special rainbow level sends you to space to take a picture of the infamous Mew! First get all Pokémon signs in all levels. Prof. Oak opens up a new level where Mew's in a bubble. Stay in the middle, hit him with a pester ball three times as he passes. He's far away, so throw the ball ahead of him so he runs into it. After Mew is out of his bubble, he chases it. Hit him again to stun him. Move in for a great picture worth tons of points!

10. NBA Live 2000 (PS)

Unlock Legends Players

Go to Create Player. From Game Setup, press Circle. Scroll to player icon, press RIGHT on D-pad, press X. Enter first part of code/phrase in FIRST NAME entry field. Press X. Enter the second part of code/phrase in LAST NAME entry field. Press X. Player is unlocked. Go to UNLOCK LEGENDS Screen. Press Start for Game Setup, press Circle. Scroll to STAR icon, press X. To activate Legend, highlight name and hit X. He's in FREE AGENTS POOL, sign him to any empty team slot.

Four Dream Team Legends...

Karl Malone - '90s
First Name - Malman
Last Name - Delivers
Charles Barkley - '80s
First Name - Mound of
Last Name - Rebound
John Stockton - '90s
First Name - Jstz
Last Name - Wan
Reggie Miller - '90s
First Name - Gusside
Last Name - Threat



KILLER DEXDRIVE SITES

PlayStation:

www.bright.net/~promo/dexdrive/psx_saves.htm

www.dexcite.net

www.psxmax.com/cheats/dex/index.html

www.geocities.com/Area51/Shell/4921/psasaves.html

Nintendo 64:

www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/Comidor/8554/N64Saves.html

Circle, Right, Up, Down, Circle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle. The screen shakes if entered correctly. Go to the Main Menu Screen. Choose to continue the career mode, and Officer Dick will be available, plus all tapes, levels, medals, stats and FMV movies.

Sam Accardi
N. Wildwood, NJ

GAME BOY

Godzilla: The Series Cool Passwords



On the Main Menu Screen, choose Password and enter any of the following codes:

Level 2: NCFRGJBSBK
Level 3: DMFTLS8FQM
Level 4: PKDJMPLNPS
Level 5: KDQLHRNDCN
Level 6: DQSPCFPFJR
Ultimate Password
Put in DMJMBJRFRR to begin with full power on the last level.

Prince of Persia Level Passwords



Go to the Continue option and then enter the sequence of numbers as shown to jump to the following levels:
Level 8 - 70914195
Level 9 - 68813685

Level 10 - 05414654

Press Start after entering one of the codes to open the door.

The Smurfs' Nightmare Smurfy Passwords



The Rabbit Race - Brainy Smurf, Handy Smurf, Shy Smurf
Mysterious Planet 1 - Astronaut Smurf, Shy Smurf, Brainy Smurf
The Workbench Gone Mad 1 - Shy Smurf, Baker Smurf, Handy Smurf

V-Rally Edition 99 Access Medium and Hard Tracks



To get the medium tracks in Arcade Mode, enter this code: FAST.



To get the hard tracks in Arcade Mode, enter this code: FOOD.

Cool GameShark Codes

NINTENDO 64

Namco Museum 64

Enable Code (must Be On)

F991F41000

Pac-Man Infinite Credits

800d88170063

Pec-Man Infinite Lives P1

800b8230004

Pac-Men Infinite Lives P2

800b8270004

Ms. Pac-Men Infinite Credits

800b8480063

Ms. Pac-Man Infinite Lives P1

800b8230004

Ms. Pec-Man Infinite Lives P2

800b8270004

Galega Infinite Credits

800d7640063

Geliga Infinite Lives (both players)

800d75100002

Galaxian Infinite Credits

800cd300063

Galaxian Infinite Lives

800cd3d0003

Pole Position Infinite Time

8010a2430063

Dig-Dug Infinite Credits

800f67e0063

Dig-Dug Infinite Lives P1

800f67090002

Dig-Dug Infinite Lives P2

800f6760004

PLAYSTATION

Konami Arcade Classics

Super Cobra-Infinite Fuel P1

800f3bc8c00

Super Cobra-Infinite Lives P1

800f3bf00003

Road Fighter-P1 Starts with 99 Cars Passed

800ee9a0063

Gyruss-Infinite Lives P1

800f50e82403

800f51082403

Time Pilot-Infinite Lives P1

800f67e80103

800f67f80103

Circus Cherie-Infinite Lives P1

800edce80003

Shao Lin's Road-Infinite Lives P1

800e95600003

Roc'n Rope-Infinite Lives P1

800f0ba80002



FINAL WORD

The Decline of N64



Dean Hager

Dean: Am I sad to see the N64 fade away? Not really. As someone who primarily plays sports games, the N64 never gave me much to go nuts over. Aside from Acclaim's All-Star Baseball series, all the "A" grade sports titles can be found on the PlayStation anyway. Other reasons I'm not sad: I never liked the analog controller, expensive cartridges or the trademark foggy graphics.



John Davison

John: First-party games are nearly all fantastic...but we need more than games with Mario and his chums or various fluffy animals in them. I understand Nintendo's



Shawn Smith

"The M-rated Conker's Bad Fur Day looks to deliver all the 'balls' you could want in a game—literally."

whole "ethos"—but we need (as someone said in Letters this month) more games with "balls." Perfect Dark looks wonderful...but it should have come much sooner in the system's life. Right now it's more like a "thank you" from Nintendo for sticking with them for so long rather than a kick-*ass* game to make everyone excited. After PD we get Banjo-Tooie...yet another 3D platform game. How many of these do we need? Take one part Donkey Kong 64, mix in some Banjo Kazooie—and ooh, look...another fluffy platformer.



Cyril Woohok

Shawn: The Nintendo 64's situation at this point is similar to the Saturn's toward the end of its life: There are a few key games on the way from Nintendo, but not very many overall. Furthermore, even though the games on the system are still enjoyable, the technology under the hood limits what the thing can do. Now that I've played games on the Dreamcast, I want more from my game-playing experience. Now don't get me wrong, there's a part of me that's perfectly happy playing a side-scroller on the Super NES. But at the same time, I can't deny things are changing technologically—and I think it's changing for the better. And the N64 just isn't part of these upcoming changes. It's best: the N64 finds its permanent resting place shortly after Perfect Dark and Banjo-Tooie hit.



Chee Chee

Cyril: I feel the same way about the N64 as I did with all of my other dying or dead systems. I got my money's worth. I was blown away when I bought it and I'll still buy the AAA titles, although few and far between. I guess I would be more upset if it was my only system. My only major



Grapin Boyer

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complaint was Nintendo's decision to stick with cartridges and their claims that the cartridge would be better than a CD. They addressed the cartridge shortcomings with promises of the writeable media add-on, the 64DD. **Che:** Despite going through a very conspicuous entropy, the N64 still manages to get people fired up about their games. Just look at the numbers that Donkey Kong 64 managed to rack up...and with Perfect Dark, Zelda, Mario Party 2, Mario RPG, Kirby and Pokémon Stadium on the way for Y2K, we're looking

at another very solid, if not confounding year for Nintendo, their fans, and their critics. Also, keep in mind that all this is against a backdrop of DC and PS2 graphics and storage medium. I'm constantly fascinated with how Nintendo operates in a bubble of denial. The system has its handful of classics, but I won't miss its crippling cartridge media, flagging third-party support, and the total dearth of 2D games (OK, well Bangoia was a slowdown-plagued miracle).

Crispin: The N64 may be in the twilight of its life cycle, but I'm actually more excited about the system than ever. This year's lineup of first-party stuff'll help the system go out with a bang. We get a Zelda sequel. The M-rated Conker's Bad Fur Day looks to deliver all the "balls" you could want in a game—literally. And Perfect Dark packs so many play options that I predict people will still be playing this game regularly two years from now. System sales will no doubt spike again when Pokémon Stadium hits in March. Something like half of all Pokémon players don't have an N64, so you can imagine Nintendo will be all over those color N64s this year. Yes, I'm glad I own other consoles besides the N64, since amazing games are rare, but I wouldn't give up my system for anything right now.

John: Perfect Dark is certainly a shot in the arm for the system, but I think we need to see cheaper cartridges to go along with the cheaper, funky-looking systems. I think lots of those Pokémon owners you're talking about will be much more inclined to hop aboard Nintendo's 64-Bit ride if the games were cheaper.



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Computer Contest. Win a blazing fast computer with 500 MHz MMX Pentium III, 128 meg. RAM, 14 Gig. HD, DVD, Windows 98, modem and more!

Video Game Contest. Play on the hi-tech cutting edge with this line-up: Sony Playstation w/ ASCII control pads; Sega Dreamcast; Game Boy Pocket; and Nintendo 64! Get all four or trade the ones you don't want for CASH! Bonus options include: 33" monitor, \$1,000 in games you choose, cash, accessories and more!

Media Rig Contest. The Ultimate Gaming Environment, 60 inch monitor, 130 watt receiver w/ Dolby Digital Surround, DVD and all components shown. Win DSS Satellite Receiver as a BONUS OPTION! This rig will blow you away!!

We're talkin' GAMING HEAVEN!

Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the side. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

In the future. For each contest there will be four more puzzles at \$2.00 each and one much tougher final at \$1.00 which will be sent to you by mail. You will have 3 weeks to solve each puzzle. We don't know how many will play but typically 55% will have the highest score possible score to Phase I, 43% to Phase II, 36% to Phase III, and 32% to Phase IV. Highest score in the final determines the winner. If players are still tied they will split the value of the grand prize they are playing for.

Mystery Word Grid

	H						Mystery Word
		E					
P	I	N	C	H	W		
	R						
S							

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH.....W	PRESS.....K	BLAST.....A	WRECK.....D
BREAK.....Z	PUNCH.....S	SPRAY.....C	TURBO.....V
STOMP.....T	STAND.....R	PRESS.....E	DREAM.....O
CRUSH.....I	SCORE.....H	SLANT.....L	CHASE.....P

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Case of Anne 4	\$49.99	Resurrection	\$39.99
Case of Anne 5	\$49.99	Rocky Horror Picture Show	\$49.99
Case of Anne 6	\$49.99	Shrek: The Animated Series	\$49.99
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Case of Anne 11	\$49.99	Shrek: The Musical 3	\$49.99
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Case of Anne 17	\$49.99	Shrek: The Musical 9	\$49.99
Case of Anne 18	\$49.99	Shrek: The Musical 10	\$49.99
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\$40.99 **\$58.99**

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NEXT MONTH

May 2000

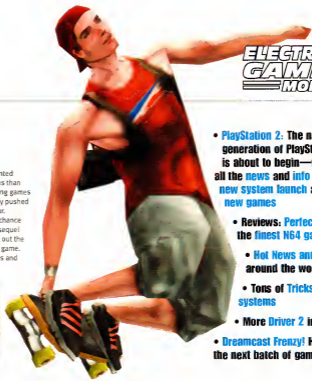
On sale April 4

EXCLUSIVE! Tony Hawk 2

The first game was an unprecedented success and sold a lot more copies than anyone anticipated. It made skating games 'cool' after all this time, and finally pushed snowboarding off the 'gen-X' radar. Next month we get the exclusive chance to look behind the scenes at the sequel due out later this year, and check out the Dreamcast version of the original game. Look for interviews with the teams and with Tony himself.



Tony Hawk looks even better on the Dreamcast.



ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY

- **PlayStation 2:** The next generation of PlayStation gaming is about to begin—we bring you all the news and info about the new system launch and all of the new games
- **Reviews:** Perfect Dark. Is it the finest N64 game ever?
- **Hot News and gossip** from around the world
- **Tons of Tricks** for all systems
- **More Driver 2** information
- **Dreamcast Frenzy!** Hot news on the next batch of games from Sega

Official
PlayStation
Magazine

April 2000

On sale March 14

EXPERT GAMER

April 2000

On sale March 21

WWF SmackDown!

QPM's got a review of 989's hot new action game, **Syphon Filter 2**, along with reviews of other big titles like **WWF SmackDown!** and **Fear Effect**. Plus, all the latest PS news and previews, tons of tricks, brand-new PlayStation2 screens, and that fabulous Demo Disc. And don't miss our first look at the new **Star Trek** game!



Demo Disc

Playables

- Hot Shots Golf 2
- Gekido
- Spider-Man
- Colony Wars: Red Sun
- Rollcage Stage 2
- Eagle One: Harrier Attack

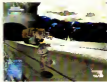
Non Playables

- Galerians
- WWF SmackDown!

Syphon Filter 2

Who's da man? Gabe's da man, and XG's got him covered. That's right, kiddies, **Syphon Filter 2** is here and XG won't miss one sneaky step. Tear into the game with a complete walk-through, full maps and secrets galore. You don't want to miss it. If Spring's got you in the mood to hit the links, be sure to check out their complete guide to **Hot Shots Golf 2**. Plus, they'll feature **Fear Effect**, **Galerians**, **WWF SmackDown!**, **NASCAR Rumble**, **Dragon Warrior Monsters**, and more! And oh yeah, did somebody mention previews? Hmm...

- **Syphon Filter 2 Blowout**—all maps, secrets and more
- **Hot Shots Golf 2 tips and secrets revealed**
- **Full Fear Effect walk-through**
- **Over 2,000 HOT codes!!**



*All editorial content is subject to change

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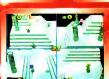
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